

Ver. 26. *And when the People were come into the Wood, behold, the Honey dropped, but no Man put his Hand to his Mouth; for the People feared the Oath.]* Wild Honey was so copious in those Countries, and flowed so plentifully, that it gave occasion to that hyperbolical Speech in the Book of Job, xx. 17. where we read of Brooks, or Torrents, of Honey and Butter.

Ver. 27. *And Jonathan heard not when his Father charged the People with the Oath.]* He and his Armour-bearer being engaged in Fight (with whom some others joined, ver. 21.) long before Saul and his small Army came to join him.

*Wherefore he put forth the end of his Rod, and dipt it in an Honey-comb, and put his Hand to his Mouth, and his Eyes were enlightned.]* That is, his Spirits and Strength, which were quite spent by long Abstinence from Meat, so that he could scarce see, were restored to him, and he was made fresh and lively to proceed in pursuit of the Enemy. For as Gerb. Vossius observes (lib. 4. de Orig. & Progr. Idol. Cap. lxxix.) the Eyes are wont to grow dim with long hunger: And as all Meat and Drink refreshes and enlivens; so Wine and Honey do it above all other more speedily. For their Spirits are both very subtle, and soon diffuse their Strength through the Body. It is also observed by Learned Men, that Honey is an excellent Medicine for sore and weak Eyes: But that is nothing to this purpose; such Cures being not performed by eating of it, but by anointing the Eyes with it.

Ver. 28. *Then answered one of the People.]* That came with Saul to the Pursuit.

*And said, Thy Father charged the People with an Oath, saying, Cursed be the Man that eateth any Food to-day: and the People were faint.]* And yet forbore to take any Refreshment, for fear of the Curse.

Ver. 29. *Then said Jonathan, My Father hath troubled the Land; see I pray you how mine Eyes have been enlightned, because I tasted a little of this Honey.]* Which did not cause so long a stay, as to hinder the Pursuit of the Enemy.

Ver. 30. *How much more, if haply the People had eaten freely this day of the Spoil of their Enemies, which they found: for had there not been now a much greater Slaughter among the Philistines?* They would have been able to pursue them more swiftly, and to have done greater Execution upon them; than they could when they were faint. Thus Men, by their Rashness, hinder what they would have.

Ver. 31. *And they smote the Philistines that day, from Michmash to Ajalo.]* A City in the Tribe of Dan (Josh. xiv. 42.) which bordered upon the Country of the Philistines.

*And the People were very faint.]* Otherwise they might have pursued further.

Ver. 32. *And the People flew upon the Spoil.]* Like a ravenous Bird, which wanted Food.

*And took Sheep and Oxen and Calves, and slew them on the ground, and the People did eat them with the Blood.]* Raw, or but half roasted or boiled, their Hunger being so sharp, that it made them forget their Duty.

Ver. 33. *Then they told Saul, saying, Behold, the People sin against the LORD, in that they eat*

*with the Blood.]* All the People were not so profane, but only some part of them.

*And he said, Ye have transgressed: roll a great Stone unto me.]* Our learned Dr. Spencer thinks they did not eat *with the Blood*, as we translate it; but *upon* or *by the Blood*. Which was an idolatrous Custom in the East, to invite the Familiarity of Demons, as hath been noted on Levit. xix. 26. And therefore Saul; to keep the People from thus defiling themselves, commanded a great Stone to be brought to him; that there they might kill their Beasts at that one place, and then feed upon them. See de Leg. & Rit. Hebr. p. 334. But this doth not seem probable, that they should now practise those idolatrous Rites, when God had wrought such a wonderful Deliverance for them; and they were so impatient to eat; that they had not time to think of such Ceremonies.

Ver. 34. *And Saul said, Disperse yourselves among the people.]* He speaks unto his Officers.

*And say unto them, Bring me hither every Man his Ox, and every Man his Sheep.]* This is a sign they had not all offended; having not yet killed their Beasts.

*And slay them here, and eat, and sin not against the LORD in eating with the Blood: And all the Men brought every Man his Oxen with him that night, and slew them there.]* As many as they had occasion to use.

Ver. 25. *And Saul built an Altar unto the LORD.]* To offer Sacrifices of Peace-offerings; and give Thanks to God for this great Victory. Tho' others think it was not for Sacrifice, but only a Monument of God's Mercy, in his late Deliverance.

*The same was the first Altar that he built unto the LORD.]* In the Hebrew the Words are, (as is observed in the Margin of our Bibles) *that Altar he began to build unto the LORD*; i. e. he laid the first Stone himself. We read of his Offering before in Gilgal; but that perhaps was not upon an Altar erected by himself; but was built before by others.

Ver. 36. *And Saul said, Let us go down after the Philistines by Night, and spoil them until the Morning, and let us not leave a Man of them.]* Having thus refreshed themselves, in the Evening, Saul propounded to them to renew the pursuit: Hoping to cut off their whole Army, when they were asleep in the Night.

*And they said, Do whatsoever seemeth good unto thee.]* Their good Success made them as forward, as before they were backward to follow him.

*Then said the Priest, Let us draw near hither unto God.]* It is likely he stood before the Altar (if it were for Sacrifice) and put them in mind, that it was dangerous to undertake any thing without God's Advice: Which he was there ready to ask for them. In the Targum it is, *Let us enquire by the WORD of the LORD.*

Ver. 37. *And Saul asked Council of God.]* By Urim and Thummim.

*Shall I go down after the Philistines? wilt thou deliver them into the hand of Israel?* Hitherto Saul had some Goodness left in him: For he hearkened to the Priest, when he admonished him of his Duty, which he neglected. The



*Targum* here again hath it, *Saul asked by the WORD of the LORD.*

*But he answered him not that day.]* Tho' perhaps the Priest had often begg'd an Answer, yet he received none.

Ver. 38. *And Saul said, Draw near hither, all the chief of the People; and see wherein this Sin hath been this day.]* He concluded some Sin had provoked God, not to regard his Supplication: Which he desired might be found out and punished.

Ver. 39. *For as the LORD liveth that saveth Israel, tho' it be in Jonathan my Son, he shall surely die: But there was not a Man among the People that answered him.]* Tho' many knew that Jonathan had transgressed his Father's Charge (ver. 28.) yet none would discover it.

Ver. 40. *Then said he unto all Israel, Be you on one side; and I and Jonathan my Son will be on the other side: and the People said, Do what seemeth good unto thee.]* He had gained great Authority among the People (it appears by this, and by ver. 36.) since his wonderful Success.

Ver. 41. *Therefore Saul said unto the LORD God of Israel, Give a perfect Lot: and Saul and Jonathan were taken, and the People escaped.]* The Word *Lot* is not in the Original, but only *give perfect*, that is, declare who is innocent. So the Word *give* sometimes signifies to pronounce, Deut. xiii. 1, 2.

Ver. 42. *And Saul said, Cast Lots between me and Jonathan my Son, and Jonathan was taken.]* This looks like Virtue in him, that for good Example sake, he would not exempt himself, tho' a King, from the same Trial, to which he exposed all the People.

Ver. 43. *Then said Saul to Jonathan, Tell me what thou hast done. And Jonathan told him, and said, I did but taste a little Honey, that was in my Hand; and lo, I must die.]* This shows a very great Mind, that he neither denied what he had done, nor excused it by his Ignorance, nor refused to die: Tho' he looked upon it as very hard. So *Josephus* represents it, *εὐγενῶς καὶ μεγαλοφρονῶς*, &c. with a generous and great Mind, he told his Father the Truth; and desired not to be spared, Lib. vi. *Antiq. Cap. 7.*

Ver. 44. *And Saul answered, God do so and more also: for thou shalt surely die, Jonathan.]* This demonstrates Saul to have been of a rash, and of a rigorous Temper. With whom learned Men are wont to compare *Titus Manlius*; who caused his Son's Head to be cut off, for fighting the Enemy, when he had a fair Advantage, contrary to Order, as *A. Gellius* tells us, lib. 9. cap. 13. But in this regard Saul was to be commended, as *Josephus* also observes, that he had a greater regard to his Oath, than to his Kindred and natural Affection.

Ver. 45. *And the People said unto Saul, Shall Jonathan die, who hath wrought this great Salvation in Israel? God forbid; as the LORD liveth there shall not one Hair of his Head fall to the ground; for he hath wrought with God this day. So the People rescued Jonathan, that he died not.]* They did not rescue him by force and violence, but by their Petition to Saul, and the reason they gave for it. *Josephus* saith, that by their Prayers and Vows to God, they delivered him: Who, perhaps, signified by the Priest, that he

approved the People's desire. They were too forward indeed to swear directly against Saul's Oath: But of the two, his being the most rash, God was pleased to annul it, and absolve him from it. Thus *Josephus* understands it, *They rescued him from the Anger of his Father, καὶ εὐχὰς ὑπὲρ τῆς νεανίσκου ποιῆσαι τῷ Θεῷ, ὡς τὸν αὐτὸν ἀπολύσαι τῷ ἁμαρτήματι*, and made their Prayer to God for the young Man, that he would loose him from his Sin.

How that Phrase, *not a Hair of his Head*, &c. was used, appears from 2 Sam. xiv. 11. 1 Kings i. 51.

Ver. 46. *Then Saul went up from following the Philistines, and the Philistines went to their own Country.]* He pursued them no further, but let them go quietly to their own homes.

Ver. 47. *And Saul took the Kingdom over Israel.]* Ruled with greater Authority over his People, after this Victory: For the Philistines had enslaved them, (as I observed xiii. 2.) But by this Deliverance they were freed from their Yoke, and Saul recovered his Kingdom.

*And fought against all his Enemies on every side.]* He did not invade them (as may be gather'd from the next Verse) but repelled them, and kept them within their own Limits.

*Against Moab, and against the Children of Ammon, and against Edom, and against the Kings of Zobah, and against the Philistines.]* These were the principal Enemies wherewith they were compassed. And by the Kings of Zobah are meant those that ruled in that part of Syria, which is called *Aram Zobah*; which lay towards *Euphrates*: Having that River for its Eastern Bounds, and *Damascus* and the Land of *Canaan* for its Western. For it appears to be near to the *Israelites*, by the frequent Wars which *David* and *Solomon* had with the Kings of this Country, 2 Sam. viii. 3. x. 6. 2 Chron. vii. 3. and the Aid which the *Syrians* of *Damascus* sent them, 2 Sam. viii. 5. and their flying thither when they were routed, 1 Kings xi. 24. And the Cities which *Solomon* built in the Wilderness, 1 Kings ix. 17, 18. are said to be in *Hamath-Zobah*, 2 Chron. viii. 34. which demonstrates it was upon the Confines of *Judea*.

*And whithersoever he turned himself, he vexed them.]* He got the better of them. And in his Days the *Reubenites* also made war with the *Hagerens*, and possessed their Land, 'till the time of the Captivity, 1 Chron. v. 10, 18, 19, 20.

Ver. 48. *And he gathered an Host, and smote Amalek.]* Which War is at large described in the next Chapter.

*And delivered Israel out of the band of them that spoiled them.]* The six forementioned Nations.

Ver. 49. *And the Sons of Saul, were Jonathan, Ishui, and Melchishua, &c.]* These were only fit to accompany him in his Wars, and upon that account are only mentioned here, and xxxi. 2. tho' he had another Son, (*Ishbosheth*) who is mentioned in 1 Chron. viii. 33. under the Name of *Eth-baal*.

Ver. 50. *And the Name of Saul's Wife was Abinoam, the Daughter of Abimeaz; and the Name of the Captain of his Host was Abner, the Son of Ner, Saul's Uncle.]* For *Ner* was Brother to Saul's Father, as the next Verse tells us. It seems to me observable, that we never read of more than



than one Wife that *Saul* had, tho' *David* had many. It is possible he did not think it prudent, in a new-erected Kingdom, to follow the Example of the Eastern Kings in every thing.

Ver. 51. *And Kish was the Father of Saul : and Ner the Father of Abner was the Son of Abiel.*] As *Kish* also was, ix. 1.

Ver. 52. *And there was sore War against the Philistines all the Days of Saul.*] Who could not perfectly subdue them ; as appears from their renewing the War, Chap. xvii, &c.

*And when Saul saw any strong Man, or any valiant Man.*] Who behaved himself with Vigour and Courage in the Wars.

*He took him unto him.*] To be one of his Guard, or to be preferred in the Army.

## CHAP. XV.

Ver. 1. *S*Amuel also said to Saul, the LORD sent me to anoint thee to be King over his People, over Israel ; now therefore hearken unto the Voice of the Words of the LORD.] Being so highly obliged to God, above all other Men in the Nation, it highly concerned him to be very careful to observe his Commands ; especially having lately been disobedient, xiii. 13.

Ver. 2. *Thus saith the LORD of Hosts, I remember that which Amalek did to Israel ; how he laid wait for him in the way, when he came up from Egypt.*] See my Notes upon Deut. xxv. 17, 18.

Ver. 3. *Now go, and smite Amalek, and utterly destroy all that they have, and spare them not : but slay both Man and Woman, Infant and Suckling, Ox and Sheep, Camel and Ass.*] This heavy Sentence was pronounced against them long ago, Exod. xvii. 14. and renewed at their Entrance into Canaan, with a charge not to forget it, Deut. xxv. 19. and now ordered to be put in execution.

Ver. 4. *And Saul gathered the People together, and numbred them in Telaim, two hundred thousand Foot-men, and ten thousand Men of Judah.*] The Word *Telaim* signifying Lambs (which it is likely were very plentiful in this Place) the Targum translates it, *he numbred them by Paschal Lambs* : As if the Passover was kept at this time. And so *Rasi* fancies that it being unlawful to number the People, he commanded every Man to take a Lamb out of the Flock, and numbred them. But *David Kimchi*, and others, take this as we do, for the Name of a Place called *Telem*, in the Tribe of Judah, Josh. xv. 15. For there is no place mentioned in Scripture called *Telaim* ; nor any so near it in Sound as this. See *Selden* Lib. 3. de Synedr. Cap. 11. N. v. and *Bochart's Hierozoicon*. P. 1. Lib. 2. Cap. 43. I have often observed that their Armies consisted of Footmen, they having no Horses in Judaea. And in two regards they were more useful than Horsemen, as *Vegetius* observes Lib. 2. de Re militari, Cap. 1. first, because *possunt ubique prodesse*, they may be serviceable every where, which Horsemen cannot. And secondly, a great Number of them, *sumptu & expensa minore nutritur*, is maintained at less Expence and Charge.

Ver. 5. *And Saul came to a City of Amalek.]* To the Metropolis of the Kingdom, whose Name perhaps was *Amalek*. For so the Words may be understood, *he came to the City Amalek*.

*And laid in wait in the Valley.*] Or fought them in the Valley, as we translate it in the Margin : For they came out to give Battle.

Ver. 6. *And Saul said to the Kenites.]* Who were of the Posterity of *Jethro* : Some of which were in the Tribe of Judah, others in *Naphthali* ; and some it seems dwelt among the *Amalekites* in the rocky part of that Country, Numb. xxiv. 21.

*Go, depart, get ye down.*] For they dwelt on high.

*From among the Amalekites, lest I destroy you with them.*] For some of the *Amalekites* it is likely would flee to them for shelter.

*For you shewed Kindness to the children of Israel, when they came out of Egypt.* Some of their Ancestors did, which the *Israelites* did not forget. Exod. xviii. 12. Numb. x. 31.

*And the Kenites departed from among the Amalekites.*] And went, it is likely, into the Land of Judah.

Ver. 7. *And Saul smote the Amalekites from Havilah, until thou come to Shur, that is over against Egypt.]* That is, their whole Country, of which this was the Extent ; from *Havilah* in the North-East, to *Shur* in the South-West. These two, *Havilah* and *Shur*, are constantly opposed, as the most opposite Terms of Arabia, as *Bochartus* hath observed in his *Phaleg*. Lib. 4. Cap. 6.

Ver. 8. *And Saul took Agag the King of the Amalekites alive, and utterly destroyed all the People with the edge of the Sword.]* That is, all that could be met with : But some fled no doubt as soon as they saw him victorious ; and saved themselves in other Countries. Accordingly we read of good Numbers of this People afterwards.

Ver. 9. *But Saul and the People spared Agag.]* Whosoever proposed it, they all agreed in it, not to kill *Agag* : And *Saul*, it is most likely, was the chief Author of this Counsel. Who, *Θαυμάσας τὸ κάλλος καὶ τὸ μέγεθος τοῦ σώματος* (as *Josephus* speaks) being struck with Admiration of him as a very goodly and proper Person, thought fit to save him. Not following herein the Command of God, but his own private Fancy and Affection, Lib. vi. Antiq. Cap. viii. Others think he intended to lead him in Triumph. See ver. 12.

*And the best of the Sheep, and of the Oxen, and of the Fatlings and of the Lambs.]* Interpreters wonderfully vary about the Sense of the Word *Hamisnim*, which we translate *Fatlings* : As may be seen in *Bochartus* his *Hierozoicon*, P. 1. Lib. 2. Cap. 43. fol. 430. where he shows it signifies Cattle in their full Strength.

*All that was good.]* Of their Household Goods (I suppose) Apparel, and such like things.

*And would not utterly destroy them.]* As they had been commanded by God ; but took them as a Prey unto themselves.

*But every thing that was vile and refuse, that destroyed they utterly.]* All that was not worth the keeping. Which is a wonderful instance of



of the Baseness of human Nature; when governed by Covetousness, or any such like Affection.

Ver. 10. *Then came the Word of the LORD unto Samuel, saying.*] Immediately before Saul returned from his Expedition.

Ver. 11. *It repenteth me that I have set up Saul to be King.*] Whom he resolved now to throw down from his Throne. See ver. 29. For Repentance in God, imports only the Will of a Change, and not of every Change, but of the Divine Sentence pronounced, which the Scripture calls Repentance. So *Procopius Gazæus, Penitentia Dei est Dispensationis ipsius mutatio*, God's Repentance is the Change of his own Dispensation.

*For he is turned back from following me, and hath not performed my Commandment. And it grieved Samuel, and he cried unto the LORD all Night.*] Beseeching him to pardon Saul.

Ver. 12. *And when Samuel rose up early to meet Saul, in the Morning, it was told Samuel, saying, Saul came to Carmel.*] A City in the Mountains of the Tribe of Judah, where Nabal dwelt, who is called the Carmelite, xxvii. 3. See *Josh. xv. 55*.

*And behold he set him up a place.*] Either for the dividing of the Spoil, as the Targum understands it; or marking out a Camp, as *Kimchi*; or he erected a triumphal Arch, as *St. Hierom*: Having brought Agag with him, to make his Triumph the greater. Which Arch, it may be thought, was in the Form of an Hand: For in the Hebrew the Word we translate Place is *Jad*, which signifies an Hand. Or, as *Rasi* will have it, he here built an Altar: which *Elijah* in future Times repaired, 1 *Kings* xviii. 30. But this is a very gross Mistake: For this Carmel was very remote from that Mount which *Elijah* frequented, as *Bochartus* hath observed, P. 1. *Hieroz. Lib. 2. Cap. 48*. It may be rather thought, to be some Building, erected in the Form before-mentioned, to signify that they overcame the Amalekites with a strong Hand.

*And is gone down, and passed on, and gone down to Gilgal.*] In a long Pomp, I suppose, as a mighty Conqueror.

Ver. 13. *And Samuel came to Saul, and Saul said to him, Blessed be thou of the LORD.*] A Form of Salutation wishing him all Happiness from God: Who had ordered him to undertake such a piece of Service, as he had done him.

*I have performed the Commandment of the LORD.*] He was so insensible of any Fault he had committed, that he boasts of his Performance.

Ver. 14. *And Samuel said, What means then this bleating of the Sheep, &c.*] Which he had commanded him utterly to destroy, ver. 3.

Ver. 15. *And Saul said, They have brought them from the Amalekites.*] He lays the blame upon the People, when it is evident he himself was principally in fault, ver. 9.

*And the People spared the best of the Sheep, and of the Oxen, to sacrifice unto the LORD thy God, and the rest they have utterly destroyed.*] This was a plausible pretence, it being the Custom all the World over, to give part of their Spoils

in War unto their Gods. If there had not been an express Command for destroying every thing in this War: So that nothing should be spared either for himself, or for them.

Ver. 16. *And Samuel said unto Saul, Stay.*] This sounds, as if Saul was going away: Being abundantly satisfied in his noble Achievements.

*And I will tell thee what the LORD hath said unto me this Night.*] When he cried to him without ceasing, ver. 11. Tho' Samuel was a Prophet, saith *Procopius Gazæus*, yet speaking to a King, he begs leave he may do it freely.

*And he said, Say on.*] He hoped, it is likely, to hear himself commended for his Piety.

Ver. 17. *Then Samuel said unto Saul, When thou wast little in thy own sight, wast thou not made the Head of the Tribes of Israel, and the LORD anointed thee King over Israel?*] It is of great use for Men to remember what they were: As *Placilla* the Wife of *Theodosius* (*Strigellius* here observes) said to her Husband, *Αεί σε προσέκλειε λογίζεσθαι, τὸ μὲν ἦθα πάλαι, τι δὲ γέγονας νῦν, &c.* It behoves thee always to think what thou wast heretofore, and what thou art now. For calling these things to mind, thou wilt not be ungrateful to thy Benefactor: but govern the Kingdom thou hast received, according to the Laws; and by that means honour him that bestowed it upon thee.

Ver. 18. *And the LORD sent thee on a Journey, and said, Go, and utterly destroy the sinners the Amalekites.*] He was employed in a very honourable Expedition, to destroy the declared Enemies of the LORD.

Ver. 19. *Wherefore then didst thou not obey the Voice of the LORD, but didst fly upon the spoil.*] With great greediness, as a hungry Bird or Beast upon his Prey.

*And didst evil in the sight of the LORD?*] The Command was as plain as Words could make it: So that there was no reason but his own base Covetousness, why it was not obeyed.

Ver. 20. *And Saul said unto Samuel, Yea, I have obeyed the Voice of the LORD, and have gone the way which the LORD sent me, and have brought Agag King of the Amalekites, and have utterly destroyed the Amalekites.*] A strange Stupidity! to imagine such a partial Obedience could be pleasing unto God.

Ver. 21. *But the people took of the spoil, Sheep and Oxen, the chief things that should have been utterly destroyed, to sacrifice unto the LORD thy God in Gilgal.*] This was a mean thing, to throw all the blame on the People, whom he should have governed better: And it was worst of all, to let them pretend Religion for their Disobedience.

Ver. 22. *And Samuel said, Hath the LORD as great delight in Burnt-offerings and Sacrifices, as in obeying the Voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey is better than Sacrifice, and to hearken than the Fat of Rams.*] This most divine Admonition is inculcated by all following inspired Writers, *David, Solomon*, and the Prophets. See *Psal. l. 13, 14. Psal. li. 16, 17. Eccles. v. 1. Isaiab i. 11, 12, &c. Isaiab lxvi. 3. Jerem. vii. 21, 22, &c. Hosea vi. 6. Micah vi. 6, 7, 8. Zach. viii. 16*. And some of the Heathen have said excellent things to this purpose.



Ver. 23. *For Rebellion is as the Sin of Witchcraft.] Or, following after Divination: Which is opposed to Prophecy, as Idols are to God.*

*And Stubbornness is as Iniquity and Idolatry.] The Words *aven* and *teraphim* signify all manner of Idolatry. From which tho' Saul was free, yet his obstinate Disobedience made him liable to such Punishment, as Idolaters deserved. For as they were to be cut off, so he was to be dethroned, as it here follows.*

*Because thou hast rejected the word of the LORD, he also hath rejected thee from being King.] As Idolaters were to lose their Lives; so he and his Posterity lost the Kingdom. And it is observable, that he was at last slain by the hand of an Amalekite, 2 Sam. i. 8.*

Ver. 24. *And Saul said unto Samuel, I have sinned, for I have transgressed the Commandment of the LORD, and thy Word: because I feared the People, and obeyed their Voice.] It is not certain whether he led the People into this Sin, or they led him. I look upon this only as an Excuse (he having no reason to fear the People, who were all at his Command) and that he was not yet thoroughly sensible of his Guilt.*

Ver. 25. *Now therefore I pray thee, pardon my Sin.] By deprecating God's Displeasure.*

*And turn again with me.] To Gilgal; from whence he came forth to meet Samuel.*

*That I may worship the LORD.] And by Samuel's Prayers obtain a Pardon.*

Ver. 26. *And Samuel said unto Saul, I will not return with thee; for thou hast rejected the Word of the LORD, and the LORD hath rejected thee from being King over Israel.] The Prophet look'd upon God's Sentence as peremptory; and therefore peremptorily denied his Request.*

Ver. 27. *And as Samuel turned about to go away, he laid hold upon the Skirt of his Mantle.] It was a four-square Garment, covering the Breast and the Back; knit at the Shoulder, but open on the Sides, as Jo. Braunius hath shown, Lib. 2. de Vestitu Sacerd. Hebr. Cap. 5. N. 8. On this Saul laid hold, that he might stop Samuel from going away.*

*And it rent.] A sign the motion of Samuel was violent; he being full of Indignation against Saul.*

Ver. 28. *And Samuel said, The LORD hath rent the Kingdom of Israel from thee this day; and hath given it to a Neighbour of thine, that is better than thou.] That casual Rent, he took to be an apt Representation of his Destiny.*

Ver. 29. *And also the Strength of Israel.] The Word we translate Strength imports Victory (as is observed in the Margin) and therefore these Words should be translated; He that gives Victory, and disposes Kingdoms, or the triumphant King of Israel.*

*Will not lye, nor repent: for he is not a Man, that he should repent.] Sometimes, God is said to repent of the Evil, i. e. to alter his intentions of inflicting Punishment. But in this case there was no room for it, because of the Oath of God, that Amalek should be cut off. This made Saul's Sin unpardonable; it being of the like nature (to use the Words of Dr. Jackson) as if a Judge or inferior Magistrate, being intrusted*

*to do Justice in a matter, unto which his Sovereign Lord had peremptorily and determinately sworn, should upon a Bribe, or other sinister respect, neglect his Duty, and (as much as in him lay) make his Master forsworn. For an inferior Judge to do this, deserves more bodily Deaths than one. And therefore tho' God did repent that he had made Saul King, (for he had the Kingdom only by meer Promise, not by a Promise confirmed by an Oath) yet he would not repent his Deposition, nor reverse the Sentence against him; because by his preposterous Indulgence unto Amalek (God's sworn Enemy) he did by this Fact incur the Sentence of Deposition by Oath.*

Ver. 30. *And he said, I have sinned.] Now he makes a downright acknowledgment of his Guilt; without any Alleviations of it, from the Fear he was in of the People, or any other thing, ver. 24.*

*Yet honour me, I pray thee, before my People, and before Israel.] He submitted to the Sentence; and only desired while he was King he might not lose his Honour with those that waited on him, and with the rest of his Subjects.*

*And turn again with me, that I may worship the LORD thy God.] He speaks as if he thought, that unless it were for Samuel's sake he was afraid God would not regard him.*

Ver. 31. *And Samuel turned again with Saul.] He said before he would not, ver. 26. But upon his Importunity (and ordered perhaps by God) he altered his Mind. For he spake before only his present Thoughts, which upon further Reason he might change.*

*And Saul worshipped the LORD.] In the company of Samuel; that the People might not despise his Authority, while he held it.*

Ver. 32. *Then said Samuel, Bring ye hither unto me, Agag the King of the Amalekites.] This he spake to the People, in the presence of Saul; that he might see what he ought to have done himself.*

*And Agag came unto him delicately.] Or, walking in State; for tho' he was at the point of Death, saith Kimchi, he could not forbear to come to Samuel in an haughty manner: But this Word seems to relate to Softness, rather than Pride; and signify that he came to him with a soft pace, treading gingerly (as we speak) after a nice and delicate manner.*

*And Agag said, Surely the Bitterness of Death is past.] Being spared by Saul and his Soldiers, he feared no hurt from a Prophet.*

Ver. 33. *And Samuel said, As thy Sword hath made Women childless, so shall thy Mother be childless among Women.] This shows he had been a bloody Tyrant; and was now cut off, not merely for the Sins of his Ancestors four hundred years ago; but for his own merciless Cruelty.*

*And Samuel bewed Agag to pieces.] He commanded it to be done by the publick Executioner of Justice: Or perhaps did it himself. See Judg. viii. 20. This doth not prove that Samuel continued a Judge after Saul was anointed: But he was authorized to do this by a special Command from God.*



*Before the LORD in Gilgal.]* For here they had been praying, and offering Sacrifice: And God was present in all the great Assemblies of his People. See *Judges* xx. 1.

*Ver. 34. Then Samuel went to Ramah.]* Where he commonly lived, vii. ult.

*And Saul went up to his House in Gibeah of Saul.]* Which was the place of his Birth, and constant Abode, x. 26. xiv. 2.

*Ver. 35. And Samuel came no more to see Saul until the day of his Death.]* He was wont, it is likely, to make him frequent Visits: But now he forsook him, as a Man abandoned by God.

*Nevertheless Samuel mourned for Saul.]* Yet he had still so much Love to him, or to his Country, as to lament the sad Condition into which he was fallen.

*And the LORD repented that he had made Saul King over Israel.]* In Testimony whereof he utterly cast him off; and all Samuel's Tears could not procure a Reversal of the Sentence pronounced against him.

## CHAP. XVI.

*Verse 1. AND the LORD said unto Samuel, how long wilt thou mourn for Saul; seeing I have rejected him from being King over Israel?]* Since God had told him so plainly, and positively that the Sentence against him was irreversible, it was in vain to mourn and to pray (as some think he did) for his restitution to God's Favour.

*Fill thy horn with Oil, and go to Jesse the Bethlemite: for I have provided me a King among his Sons.]* It might increase his Sorrow, perhaps, to think that Saul should die suddenly, there was none yet appointed by God to succeed him. Which might be one Reason why now God declared his Pleasure about that matter.

*Ver. 2. And Samuel said, How can I go?]* That is, with safety.

*If Saul hear it, he will kill me.]* For he was enraged at the Sentence passed upon him; tho' at that present he seemed to submit unto it.

*And the LORD said, Take an Heifer with thee, and say I am come to sacrifice unto the LORD.]* Which he, being a Prophet, might do any where: All the Ritual Laws being subject to the Prophets.

*Ver. 3. And call Jesse to the Sacrifice.]* To an Eucharistical Feast upon the Sacrifice: Unto which they might invite their Neighbours and Friends.

*And I will shew thee what thou shalt do, and thou shalt anoint him whom I will name unto thee.]* God promises to direct him so to manage the Business, that he should come into no danger. From whence it may be gathered, that it was not the holy Oil wherewith he anointed him, for that was kept in the Sanctuary: Unto which place he could not have gone to fetch it, but it would have been known, and raised Suspicions of what he was going to do. See *Fort. Scacchus* in his *Myrothecium*, Lib. 3. Cap. 46.

*Ver. 4. And Samuel did that which the LORD spake.]* Took an Horn of Oil, and an Heifer.

*And came to Bethlehem, and the Elders of the Town trembled at his coming.]* They went out, I

suppose, to meet him, but trembled when they saw him.

*And said, Comest thou peaceably?]* They were afraid that he came to reprove them for some Sin that was in their City; or that he fled to them for Security against Saul's Anger, which might bring them into Danger.

*Ver. 5. And he said, Peaceably: I am come to sacrifice unto the LORD.]* That was one Intention of his coming; and tho' there was another (to anoint David) he was not bound to declare it: For where there are two Ends of any Action, one may without any injury to Truth declare the one, and conceal the other. As *Moses* did, when he told *Pharaoh* they must go and sacrifice to God in the Wilderness; but suppressed their Intention to march to the Land of Canaan.

*Sanctify your selves, and come with me to the Sacrifice.]* See upon *Exod.* xix. 10.

*And he sanctified Jesse and his Sons, and called them to the Sacrifice.]* It is likely Jesse might be an Elder; but if he were, his Sons were not: But he gave them a particular Invitation, and took care they should come prepared. *Samuel* was not a Priest, but being a Prophet he had Authority from God, in extraordinary cases, to perform the Office of a Priest, in offering Sacrifice.

*Ver. 6. And it came to pass, when they were come.]* After the Sacrifice was over, while they were making ready the Feast, that was to follow upon it; *Samuel* took Jesse privately into a Room, and there it is likely acquainted him with his Commission: Whereupon he called for his eldest Son to come to him.

*That he looked on Eliab, and said, Surely the Anointed of the LORD is before me.]* Beholding a goodly Person, handsome and tall (as appears by the following Verse) he concluded within himself, that this was the Person God designed for his Anointed.

*Ver. 7. And the LORD said unto Samuel.]* By a secret, inward, Suggestion.

*Look not on his Countenance, nor on the height of his Stature; because I have refused him. For the LORD seeth not as Man seeth; for Man looketh on the outward Appearance, but the LORD looketh on the Heart.]* All have not a noble Spirit, who have a noble Aspect; as appeared by Saul. Which should have made Samuel not conclude so hastily, from a goodly Appearance.

*Ver. 8. Then Jesse called Abinadab, and made him pass before Samuel.]* That he might have a full View of him.

*And he said, Neither hath the LORD chosen this.]* God had suggested to him, as he did concerning the former, that he did not approve him.

*Ver. 9. Then Jesse made Shammah to pass by; and he said, Neither hath the LORD chosen this.]* He is called *Shimeah*, 2 *Sam.* xiii. 3. and *Shim-mah*, 1 *Chron.* xi. 13.

*Ver. 10. Again Jesse made seven of his Sons to pass before Samuel.]* Not all at once; but seven in all, one after another in order; David being the eighth.

*And Samuel said unto Jesse, the LORD hath not chosen these.]* These Words show that he had acquainted Jesse with his Business: But these



these four of his Sons, among whom he was to anoint one to be King, were no more qualified for it, than the three first: For he had eight Sons in all, xvii. 12.

Ver. 11. *And Samuel said unto Jesse, Are here all thy Children? and he said, There remaineth yet the youngest; and behold he keeps the Sheep.*] And so was not at home. The most excellent Commanders were anciently taken from the Plough, or from feeding Sheep, as *Pliny* observes, *Lib. 18. Natural. Histor. Cap. 5. Fortissimi viri, & milites strenuissimi ex agricolis gignuntur.* And so *Vegetius, Lib. 1. Cap. 3. De Re Militari*, discusses this Point, whether the best Soldiers came out of the City or Country: And resolves, *aptiorem armis rusticam plebem, &c.* that the Country People are most fit for Arms; who live in the open Air, and are bred up to Labour, and indure Heat, and neglect the Shade: Being unacquainted with Baths, ignorant of Delights, of a simple Mind, contented with a little; having their Bodies hardened to the enduring all Labour; who are used by their Country Life to carry Burdens, dig Trenches, and such like Labour. And therefore he concludes, that the strength of an Army is to be supplied out of the Field: For so it is, that *the less Men are acquainted with the Delights of Life, the less they fear Death.* *Moses* was thus bred a long time in the Service of *Jethro*: And *Saul* look'd after his Father's Cattle.

*And Samuel said unto Jesse, send and fetch him: for we will not sit down till he come hither.*] By this it appears, all this was transacted between the Sacrifice, and the dressing of the Meat for a Feast upon it.

Ver. 12. *And he sent and brought him in: now he was ruddy.*] His Hair was red, which in ancient times was accounted beautiful, as *Bochartus* observes from this Place. With which agree the Words of *Festus*, who having said that *Rutilius* signifies red, adds, *cujus coloris studiosæ etiam antiquæ mulieres erant.* Of which colour Women also were studious in ancient times. See *Hierozoicon, P. 1. Lib. 2. Cap. 34.* But it must be confessed, that the Hebrew Word *Admoni* doth not signify only red, but also bright and shining; as *Bochartus* himself acknowledges those Words, *Lament. iv. 7.* are to be understood, where he saith of the *Nazarites*, *Ademum azem Mippinim*, they were more shining in Body than Pearls. And I think these Words are so to be interpreted concerning *David*, that he had a clear Complexion; or, was very fair (as we speak) and lovely.

*And withal of a beautiful Countenance.*] Or, had beautiful Eyes, as the Words are in the Hebrew, *Oculis speculis & liberalibus*, as *Conradus Pellicanus* here glosses.

*And goodly to look to.*] Of a pleasant Aspect; full of Sweetness and Clemency, as the same Author understands it. All this is said to signify, that he was a goodly Person, and had greatness in his Countenance.

*And the LORD said, Arise, anoint him, for this is he.*] The Jews observe upon these Words, that it was necessary to anoint the first of a Family, that was advanced to the Kingdom; but it was not necessary to anoint his Children that succeeded him: Unless upon occasion of a Dis-

pute, by a contrary Faction. See *Selden. de Success. in Pontificat. Lib. 2. Cap. 9.*

Ver. 13. *Then Samuel took the Horn of Oil, and anointed him.*] He did not hereby invest him actually with the Kingly Power: But this anointing was only a Designation of him to succeed *Saul* after his Death. So *David* always understood it; looking upon *Saul* as the LORD's (Anointed, as long as he lived; that is, as the King of *Israel*. See *Judges ix. 8.*

*In the midst of his Brethren.*] It had better have been translated, *from the midst of his Brethren*; that is, he singled him out from the rest, and privately anointed him. For it is manifest, by what is said before, that *Samuel* was afraid to have it known, and therefore did not anoint him publicly in the midst of his Brethren. And by *Eliab's* Treatment of *David* after this (xvii. 28.) it plainly enough appears, he did not know him to be the King elect of God's People.

The Jews in *Seder Olam Rabba* (Cap. 13.) say *David* was Twenty Nine Years old, when he was anointed: Which certainly is false, if it be understood of this first Unction by *Samuel* (whereby God elected him, as in the two following *Judah* and *Israel* received him for their King) for after *Saul's* Death he reigned forty Years, and lived 'till he was seventy. So that he was thirty Years old when he began to reign: part of which time he spent in the Service of *Saul*; and after that was sorely persecuted by him. How long that Persecution lasted, is uncertain: but it continued so long, that it makes the Opinion of *Abarbinel* probable, that *David* could not be above twenty Years old, if so much, when *Samuel* anointed him.

*And the Spirit of the LORD came upon David from that day forward.*] A Spirit of Prudence to behave himself wisely upon all Occasions; with a Spirit of Courage, so that he durst grapple with a Lion and a Bear: And the Spirit of Prophecy, in which he was very eminent afterwards. In short, a Spirit fit for a Prince.

*And Samuel went up, and went to Ramab.*] Having no further Commission from God at *Bethlehem*.

Ver. 14. *But the Spirit of the LORD departed from Saul.*] Which came upon him, when he was first made King, and continued with him 'till this time, x. 11. xi. 6. yet he did not lose his Courage, but his Prudence and Skill in Government.

*And an evil Spirit from the LORD troubled him.*] He grew melancholy, timorous, and suspicious: So that he started where there was no Danger, as the Hebrew Word seems to import; and thereby became very unfit for Business, being sometimes furious and distracted; always full of Anxiety and Solitude of Mind: Sighing and trembling like a Man in the dark, as *Abarbinel* explains it. For his Blood and Spirits were thick and heavy; having lost their usual Purity and Splendor.

Ver. 15. *And Saul's Servants said unto him, Behold an evil Spirit from God troubleth thee.*] His Courtiers could not but observe a strange Disturbance in him: Which they look'd upon as so unusual, that they ascribe it to the Hand of God.



Ver. 16. *Let our Lord now command thy Servants that are before thee, to seek out a Man, who is a cunning Player upon the Harp.*] An Instrument always highly esteemed; as those were who could play well upon it. It is called *Cinnor* in the *Hebrew*, from whence no doubt the *Greek* *Κινύρα* is derived.

*And it shall come to pass, that when the evil Spirit from God is upon thee.*] When a melancholy Fit seized him.

*That he shall play with his hand, and thou shalt be well.*] It being a bodily Disease, they hoped by this means he might receive some Relief: And perhaps they had seen some Experiment made of it, upon Men in the like Condition; for Musick wonderfully alters the Spirits, and consequently the Blood: And hath a peculiar Virtue in it to cheer and delight those that are sad, and compose those that are furious, as *Saul* sometimes was.

Ver. 17. *And Saul said unto his Servants, Provide me now one that can play well, and bring him to me.*] For none durst deny his Attendance on him, as *Samuel* had described the manner of the Kingdom, viii. 11, 12, &c.

Ver. 18. *Then answered one of the Servants and said, Behold, I have seen the Son of Jesse the Bethlemite, that is cunning in playing, and a mighty valiant Man, and a Man of War, and prudent in matters, and a comely Person.*] It is likely this was some Friend or Acquaintance of *David's*, who had a mind to bring him to Court: And therefore reckons up all his good Qualities, as well as his Skill in Musick; together with his Success in all Affairs. Which tho' he manag'd with great Prudence, yet he could not have been so constantly prosperous, if God had not blessed him.

Ver. 19. *Wherefore Saul sent Messengers unto Jesse, saying, send me David thy Son, which is with the Sheep.*] This Message, it is likely, might possess *Jesse* with some Fear that the Secret was discovered.

Ver. 20. *And Jesse took an Ass laden with Bread and a Bottle of Wine, and a Kid, and sent them by David his Son, unto Saul.*] But by this Present he hoped to ingratiate his Son in his Princely Favour. The word *laden* is not in the *Hebrew*, but only *an Ass of Bread*. Which is a Phrase used in other Authors, as *Bochartus* hath observed out of *Athenæus*; who mentions this Phrase in *Sofibius*, ἄρτων τρεῖς ὄνους καὶ σπηλῖνας, *three great Asses of Loaves*, Hierozoicon, P. 1. Lib. 2. cap. 34.

Ver. 21. *And David came to Saul, and stood before him.*] Ministred unto him among the rest of his Servants.

*And he loved him greatly, and he made him his Armour-bearer.*] Which was an honourable Preferment.

Ver. 22. *And Saul sent to Jesse, saying, Let David I pray thee stand before me: for he hath found favour in my sight.*] This was an extraordinary Token of his Kindness; that he would not keep his Son to wait upon him, without his Consent.

Ver. 23. *And it came to pass, when the evil Spirit from the LORD was upon Saul, that David took an Harp and played with his hand.*] *Josephus* seems to have thought, that he also sung Hymns

and Psalms to the Harp; for his Words are, *Lib. 6. Antiq. Cap. 9.* λέγων τὰς ὕμνους καὶ ψάλλον ἐν τῇ κινύρᾳ, &c. But the illustrious *Spanheim* shows that the Word *ψαλμός* is often used for the sound of the Harp. So the Scholiast upon *Aristophanes* his *Aves*, ψαλμός κυρίως ὁ τῆς κιθάρας ἦχος. See his Observation on *Callimachus* his Hymn in *Apollinem*, ver. 12. And so *Nero* truly said (which *Tacitus* mentions in his *Annals*, L. 14. Cap. 14.) *Antiqui Duces cythara cecinerunt*. The ancient great Commanders sung to the Harp. So *Cornelius Nepos* reports of *Epaminondas*, that he was an excellent Musician.

*And Saul was refreshed, and was well.*] All Authors are full of the Power of Musick; both to stir up Passions, and to allay them; according to the several kinds of it. *Athenæus* (*Lib. 14.*) praises it for the Virtue that is in it, καὶ τὰ ἥθη παιδεύειν, καὶ τὰ θυμοειδῆς καὶ τοὺς γνώμας διαφόρους καταπραΰνειν, to regulate Men's Manners, and to allay and soften those that are furious, and disturbed in their Minds. Such Songs *Aristotle* calls μέλη καθαρκτικά, *purgative Songs*; apt to cleanse the Mind from turbid Motions, L. 8. *Polit.* See *Gerh. Vossius* concerning this in his Book *de Artibus Popularibus*, cap. 3. § 13. where he shows how Diseases of the Body have been cured by Musick, as well as of the Mind: And sect. 45, 46. he shows the Power of it over brute Creatures. *Bochartus* also enumerates many famous Artists among the Ancients, besides *Orpheus* and *Amphion* (whose History is dressed up fabulously) that are celebrated, not by Poets, but by good Historians, for their wonderful Skill in moving Men's Passions by Musick. *Hierozoicon*, P. 1. Lib. 2. Cap. 44. p. 461, &c. And long before these, the great *Erasmus* hath observed the Force of Musick in curing Diseases, and quite altering the Passions of Men's Minds, in his Preface to *Arnobius* upon the *Psalms*. Which may be found among his Epistles, *Lib. 28.* p. 1655.

*And the evil Spirit departed from him.*] For a time: There being lucid Intervals in such Distempers as his was; which frequently returned again.

## C H A P. XVII.

Verse 1. **A**ND the Philistines gathered their Armies together unto Battel.] In what Year of *Saul's* Reign this was, we are not told: But *Josephus* thinks it was not long after the things related in the foregoing Chapter. For so his Words are, χρόνους δὲ ὕστερον ἔ πολλοῖς, *not many years after*, &c. For the *Philistines* having received a great Defeat (*Chap. 14.*) resolved to be revenged, and thought they had a fair Opportunity, when they heard that *Saul* was distracted.

*And were gathered together at Shoboh which belongeth to Judah, and pitched between Shoboh and Azekah, in Ephes-dammim.*] See *Josh. xv. 35.* By this it appears, that the *Philistines* invaded the Country of the *Israelites*, and possessed themselves of some Parts of it. That place here called *Ephes-dammim*, by taking away



away the *Aleph* is called *Pas-dammim*, 1 Chron. xi. 13.

*Saul*

Ver. 2. *And Samuel and the Men of Israel were gathered together, and pitched by the Valley of Elah.*] A place I suppose in the same Tribe, for their Armies were not far one from another.

*And set the Battle in array against the Philistines.*] As ready, and desirous to fight them.

Ver. 3. *And the Philistines stood on a Mountain on the one side, and the Israelites on a Mountain on the other side: and there was a Valley between them.*] After they had faced one another some time, and neither side thought fit to engage, and begin to fight; they drew up their Armies upon two opposite Mountains, which were parted by a Valley.

Ver. 4. *And there went out a Champion out of the Camp of the Philistines, named Goliath of Gath.*] For to this City the *Anakims* fled when *Joshua* rooted them out of the Land of Canaan, *Josh.* xi. 22, 23. And here they propagated a Race of *Giants*; that is, People of great Stature and Strength.

*Whose Height was six Cubits and a Span.*] A great number of Authors write of such Men of vast Stature in ancient times. See *Magius de Gigantibus*, and *Casp. Schottus*; but especially *Hermannus Conringius*, in his Book *de antiquo statu Holmstadii*, and in another Book, *de Habitu Corporum Germanorum*; where he shows the ancient *Germans* were of a vast Size, as *Cæsar* relates in his Book *de Bello Gal.* where he calls them *immani corporum magnitudine homines*, Men of an huge Greatness of Body. And *Pomponius Mela* and others say the same. In short, they were generally seven Foot high. And now at this day, there is a whole Nation on the North side of the Strait of *Magellan*, *immani corporum vastitate*, as he there observes, p. 37.

Ver. 5. *And he had an Helmet of Brass upon his Head, and he was armed with a Coat of Mail.*] With Plates of Brass, laid one upon another, like Fishes Scales. So *Bochartus* in his *Phaleg.* Lib. 3. Cap. 13.

*And the weight of the Coat was five thousand Shekels of Brass.*] This shows he was a Man of vast Strength; who was able to walk and to fight with such prodigious Armour: which was impenetrable. Yet this is not to be understood, as *Fortunatus Schaccus* thinks, as if the Coat weighed so much, for it would have been insupportable; but that it cost so much, or was valued at five thousand Shekels of Brass. *Myrothec.* Vol. 2. p. 33.

Ver. 6. *And he had Greaves of Brass upon his Legs, and a Target of Brass between his Shoulders.*] That he might be no where vulnerable. For the Target defended his Neck as well as his Shoulders.

Ver. 7. *And the Staff of his Spear was like a Weaver's Beam; and his Spear's Head weighed six hundred Shekels of Iron.*] This was one of his offensive Weapons: By which the largeness of his Sword may be measured.

*And one bearing a Shield went before him.*] Which was proportionable, no doubt, to his Bulk: And was carried before him when he made his Challenge, for the greater State sake; but, when he fought, I suppose, was used by himself.

Ver. 8. *And he stood and cried unto the Armies of Israel.*] They were divided, it seems, into several Bodies, called here *Armies*: And they could hear one another from the Mountains on which they were incamped; and *Goliath* came down into the Valley, and there challenged any body to come and fight with him in the sight of both Armies.

*Why are ye come out to set your Battel in array?*] He charges them with Presumption, in offering to make War with the *Philistines*, who were so much superiour to them.

*Am not I a Philistine, and you Servants of Saul?*] Who doubted of this, that he was a *Philistine*, and they *Saul's* Subjects? The meaning thereof is, as *Abarbinel* explains it, that he was one of the Lords of the *Philistines*, a chief Ruler in *Gath*, subject to none; and yet would condescend to fight with any of *Saul's* Servants: Who, in comparison with him, he look'd upon as no better than Slaves. The *Targum* will have it, that he brags of his great Deeds: Particularly that he had killed *Hophni* and *Phineas* with his own hand, and taken the Ark of God captive; and therefore wonders at their Presumption, that they should come to fight with those, who had gained such Victories over them. Which is not likely, for they had, since that, been beaten twice by the *Israelites*.

*Chuse you a Man for you, and let him come down to me.*] He propounds the deciding of their Quarrel by a single Combat: Which seems to have been done out of a Bravado, rather than from any Examples of those ancient times, of ending Quarrels in this manner: For tho' it looks like a charitable design to prevent much Blood-shed; yet no Nation sure was willing to venture its whole Well-being upon one single Man's good Success. We read indeed, as I observed upon xiv. 10. of two or three single Combats, before the Armies of the two Nations engaged, but they were not intended to be decisive of the Quarrel between them. This therefore was, as I said before, an high rant of *Goliath*, proceeding from the high Opinion he had of his matchless Strength: Which made him brag, as if he was the Support of the whole Nation; which must stand or fall together with him.

Ver. 9. *If he be able to fight with me and kill me, then will we be your Servants; but if I prevail against him, and kill him, then shall ye be our Servants, and serve us.*] These Conditions were never accepted, tho' *Saul* sought for a Man to fight: But quite contrary, they were so far from being agreed on by either side, that the *Philistines* did not yield themselves Slaves to the *Israelites* upon the Death of *Goliath*; but fled to their own Country, and there defended themselves against them, and fought many Battels with them.

Ver. 10. *And the Philistine said, I defy the Armies of Israel this day; give me a Man that we may fight together.*] He expresses the utmost Contempt of their whole Army: In which he signifies there was not a Man that durst look him in the face.

Ver. 11. *When Saul and all Israel heard these Words of the Philistine, they were dismayed and greatly afraid.*] For tho' *Saul* had not quite lost his



his Courage, but gathered an Army to fight the *Philistines*; yet it was not so undaunted as it had been before the Spirit of God forsook him: And the People's Spirits sink, when their Leaders flag and are dismayed.

Ver. 12. *Now David was the Son of that Ephrathite of Bethlehem of Judah, whose name was Jesse.*] He being chosen by God to combat with *Goliath*, the Divine Writer gives an account who he was, and what Relations he had.

*He had eight Sons.*] In the Book of the *Chronicles* (1 ii. 13, 14, 15.) there are but seven mentioned: One being dead without Children, as *R. Solomon* thinks: Or being only an adopted Son.

*And the Man was accounted an old Man in the days of Saul.*] And therefore excused from going to the War.

Ver. 13. *And the three eldest Sons went and followed Saul to Battel; and the Names of his three Sons that went to the War, were Eliab the first-born, &c.*] These, I suppose, were Men of the greatest Experience, and Strength: And therefore fittest for the Service.

Ver. 14. *And David was the youngest, and the three eldest followed Saul.*] David being young, was not put to the Hardships of War: But the eldest only undertook to serve their Prince and their Country in this time of common Danger.

Ver. 15. *But David went and returned from Saul to feed his Father's Sheep at Bethlehem.*] In the beginning of this War, as *Josephus* thinks, *Saul* sent *David* home to his Father; ἀπέμεινε αὐτὸν τοῖς τριῶν υἱοῖς, &c. contenting himself with three of his Sons, who came to his Assistance, with the hazard of their Lives.

Ver. 16. *And the Philistine drew near Morning and Evening, and presented himself forty days.*] This is an Argument the *Philistines* could not force the Camp of the *Israelites*: Otherwise they would not have spent so much time in this Bravado. Unless we suppose, as *Abarbinel* doth, that all this time more Forces were marching to this Place, as their general Rendezvous, both from the Country of the *Philistines*, and from the Land of *Israel*: For such great Armies could not suddenly be got together. Or some wise Men on both sides were treating all this time, to see if they could bring matters to an Accommodation. It is a mere fancy of *R. Jonathan*, in the *Gemara* of the *Misna*, Title *Sota*, that *Goliath* drew near Morning and Evening, that he might disturb the *Israelites* at their Morning and Evening Prayers, and hinder them from reciting them.

Ver. 17. *And Jesse said unto David his Son, Take now for thy Brethren, an Ephah of this parched Corn, and these ten Loaves, and run to thy Brethren.*] For he did not know but Provision might be scarce with them; or, as some will have it, he was informed they were under some Hardship, and desired to know how they did. But having other Sons at home with him, it was by a Divine Direction that he sent *David* from the Sheep, upon this Errand.

Ver. 18. *And carry these ten Cheeses unto the Captain of their Thousand.*] Whose Favour might be very serviceable to them.

*And look how thy Brethren fare, and take their Pledge.*] Some think that they went to War, in those days, at their own Charge, and were not paid by the King. Provision therefore beginning to fail, *Jesse's* Sons had sent to him for a Supply, and by a certain token. Which their Father bids *David* take with him, to know if it were theirs. So some expound the word *Pledge*. But others think that if they had borrowed Money, or pawned any thing for it, he ordered *David* to redeem it. Or that he should bring something from them, that might certify him of their Health. Others translate the Word not *Pledge* but *Business*: And take the Sense to be; Bring me word what they do, how they behave themselves; what Company they keep, and whom they associate themselves withal.

Ver. 19. *And Saul, and they, and all the Men of Israel were in the Valley of Elah, fighting with the Philistines.*] They were now drawn up in *Battalia* (as we speak) ready to engage: Not in the Valley, but hard by it, on the side of the Mountain, where they faced the *Philistines*, and showed themselves resolved to fight, if they came down from the other Mountain.

Ver. 20. *And David rose up early in the Morning, and left the Sheep with a Keeper, and took and went as Jesse had commanded him: and he came to the Trench, as the Host was going forth to the Fight, and shouted for the Battel.*] By the Trench, may be meant the Carriages (as we translate the Word in the Margin) wherewith the Host was surrounded, instead of a Trench made about it.

Ver. 21. *For Israel and the Philistines had put the Battel in array, Army against Army.*] This is the Reason of what follows.

Ver. 22. *And David left his Carriage in the hand of the Keeper of the Carriage.*] He left the Provision which his Father had sent his Brethren, with his Servant, it being no time to present it to them, when they were just going to engage.

*And ran unto the Army, and came and saluted his Brethren.*] Acquainting them, no doubt, with their Father's Care of them.

Ver. 23. *And as he talked with them, behold there came up the Champion (the Philistine of Gath, Goliath by Name) out of the Army of the Philistines, and spake according to the same Words, and David heard them.*] Tho' the Armies stood ready to engage, yet the Vanity of *Goliath* made him once more desire the matter might be determined by a single Combat.

Ver. 24. *And all the Men of Israel, when they saw the Man, fled from him, and were sore afraid.*] They that could look the whole Army of the *Philistines* in the face (among whom they knew *Goliath* was) one would think should not flee at the sight of one Man. But the meaning is (as the next words show) they could not indure to hear his opprobrious Words against them, and his blasphemous Words against God.

Ver. 25. *And the Men of Israel said, Have you seen this Man that is come up? surely to defy Israel is he come up.*] They bewailed among themselves their sad Condition; that all the People of *Israel* should be set at naught, and vilified.



vilified by one Man; who despised both them and their God, *ver.* 45.

*And it shall be, that the Man who killeth him, the King will enrich him with great Riches, and give him his Daughter, and make his Father's House free in Israel.]* To make his Family free in Israel, was to make them noble. And the Targum translates it, make them free Princes in Israel: Particularly free from paying any Tribute or Taxes, which was a Royal Privilege; of which see Selden, Lib. 6. *de Jure Nat. & Gentium*, Cap. 14. fol. 740. Here some observe that Saul had lost his wonted Piety; for he sent not to Samuel, nor consulted the High-Priest, nor offered Sacrifice: But only proclaimed a great Reward to him that should fight with Goliath and kill him. Which showed he had not lost all Prudence: For thus Caleb won Kirjath-sepher, by offering his Daughter in Marriage to him that should take it. And David himself afterwards encouraged his Soldiers to assault the strong Fort of Zion, by promising to make him Commander in chief of all his Forces, who should first enter it. Thus Mathias Hostius observes the Athenians offered an hundred Talents to him that should bring Xerxes to them alive or dead: Many more Instances of this way of exciting Men to valiant Exploits he gives in his History of this Monomachia.

*Ver.* 26. *And David spake to the Men that stood by him, saying, What shall be done to the Man that kills this Philistine, and takes away the reproach from Israel?]* He desired them to repeat the King's Promise; signifying that he would undertake to encounter Goliath.

*For who is this Uncircumcised, that he should defy the Armies of the living God?]* He would not have them think he was mov'd by the Hope of the Reward (which was not to be despised) so much as by Zeal for God, and for his Country; which suffered by the Reproaches of one, who was not in Covenant with God: And therefore he did not fear him, nor would suffer him any longer to make such proud Boasting.

*Ver.* 27. *And the People answered him after this manner, saying, so shall it be done unto the Man that killeth him.]* They all confirmed what was before said.

*Ver.* 28. *And Eliab his elder Brother heard when he spake unto the Men, and his Anger was kindled against David, and he said, Why comest thou down hither?]* His Passion made him forget that he came by his Father's Order, to see how they did, &c.

*And with whom hast thou left those few Sheep in the Wilderness?]* This intimates, that he was fitter to look after Sheep, than to fight a Giant.

*I know thy Pride, and the Haughtiness of thine Heart, for thou art come down to see the Battel.]* Vain-glory he thought brought him to the Battel: And now made him offer to run such a desperate Adventure.

*Ver.* 29. *And David said, What have I done, Is there not a Cause?]* He justifies his Discourse; since no Man, no not Eliab himself, had the Courage to wipe off the Reproach which Goliath cast upon them all.

*Ver.* 30. *And he turned from him to another, and spake after the same manner, and the People*

*answered him again after the same manner.]* He told them he would undertake to fight Goliath; and they told him what would be his Reward if he killed him.

*Ver.* 31. *And when the Words were heard that David spake, they rehearsed them before Saul; and he sent for him.]* They had been spoken to so many, that at last they came to Saul's ear: Who desired to hear himself what he said.

*Ver.* 32. *And David said unto Saul.]* Who had told him what he heard reported of his Resolution.

*Let no Man's Heart faint because of him: for thy Servant will go and fight with this Philistine.]* In assured hope of Victory.

*Ver.* 33. *And Saul said unto David, Thou art not able to go against this Philistine to fight with him: for thou art but a Youth, and he a Man of War from his youth.]* This Saul spake out of Kindness to David; whom he would not have to hazard himself against an old Soldier, when he was unexperienced in War.

*Ver.* 34. *And David said unto Saul, thy Servant kept his Father's Sheep, and there came a Lion and a Bear, and took a Lamb out of the Flock.]* Not both together (as Castalio supposes in his Translation) but at several times; and it is likely more than once.

*Ver.* 35. *And I went out after him and smote him, and delivered him out of his mouth: and when he rose up against me, I caught him by the Beard, and smote him, and slew him.]* Sometimes he pursued the Lion and killed him in his Flight: Or if he turned again to devour him, he boldly caught him by the Beard and killed him. And in like manner we are to understand, he encounter'd the Bear.

*Ver.* 36. *Thy Servant slew both the Lion and the Bear.]* The Author of *Halicoth Olam*, by a strange fetch, concludes from hence, that he killed a Lion with two of her Whelps; and a Bear with one of her Cubs. *Pars* 4. *Cap.* 3.

*And this uncircumcised Philistine shall be as one of them; seeing he hath defied the Armies of the living God.]* He encourages himself by three Arguments. His Mastery over such terrible Creatures as a Lion and a Bear: Which made him not fear this great Beast, Goliath. Who was not one of God's People: Whom he had insolently set at naught as Varlets and Slaves (*ver.* 8.) tho' they were the Servants of the living God.

*Ver.* 37. *David said moreover, The LORD that delivered me out of the Paw of the Lion, and out of the Paw of the Bear.]* In the Hebrew it is, *out of the Hand of the Lion, and out of the Hand of the Bear:* And Aristotle observes, that Bears have Paws, *Χερσὶν ὁμοίως*, resembling Hands.

*He will deliver me out of the hand of this Philistine.]* To silence all Objections, he declares that he was possessed with a full Persuasion, that God would deliver this Philistine into his hands, as he had done the Lion and the Bear: For he felt himself full of that Spirit which then assisted him. Abarbinel thinks, that he repeats this so often, because Saul did not seem to believe it, or did not attend to it: And therefore he saith over again, *ver.* 37. what he had said, *ver.* 36. And tells him it was not by his



his own Strength, but by the mighty Power of God, that he overcame those furious Beasts : As he doubted not he should do this *Philistine* by the same Power. Whereupon *Saul* prayed God to prosper him.

*And Saul said, Go, and the LORD be with thee.*] As he believed he would.

Ver. 38. *And Saul armed David with his Armour, &c.*] Not that which he was wont to wear himself (for he was so tall it would not have fitted *David*) but he ordered them to bring out of his Armoury an Helmet and a Coat of Mail, as it here follows.

Ver. 39. *And David girded his Sword upon his Armour, and he assayed to go ; for he had not proved it : and David said unto Saul, I cannot go with these, for I have not proved them : and David put them off him.*] He was not accustomed to wear such things, not being used to go armed : And therefore begged leave to lay them aside ; as likely rather to incumber him, than facilitate his Enterprize. Which *Machiavel* in his *Principes*, Cap. 13. applies to the danger of employing mercenary Soldiers : For *aliena arma aut ex humeris decidunt, aut sunt tibi oneri, aut te constrictum tenent.*

Ver. 40. *And he took his Staff in his hand.*] His Shepherd's Staff.

*And chose him five smooth Stones out of the Brook.*] Or rather five cleft Stones : Not whole and intire, but broken. For the Word signifies *Partitions* ; and therefore denotes the Stones to have been ragged ; and sharp-pointed were most fit for his purpose. See *De Dieu*.

*And put them in a Shepherd's Bag which he had, even in a Scrip.*] Which hung by his side.

*And his Sling was in his hand.*] A sort of Weapon, in the Management of which some were wonderful skilful in antient Days. See *Judges* xx. 16. And *Livy* with other Authors mention Slingers that could hit a Mark, at a very great distance : Particularly the *Phœnicians*, who, as *Bochartus* observes, were famous Slingers ; from whom this Art was derived to the *Baleares*. See *Hierozeicon*, P. 1. Lib. 2. Cap. 44.

*And he drew near to the Philistine.*] It seems *David* made the first motion towards him, to shew he was in no fear of him.

Ver. 41. *And the Philistine came and drew near to David, and the Men that bare the Shield went before him.*] As he was wont to do, ver. 7.

Ver. 42. *And when the Philistine looked about, and saw David.*] He expected some tall, robust Person to encounter him ; and therefore at the first did not mind *David*, who was but a Strippling.

*He despised him, for he was but a Youth, and ruddy, and of a fair Countenance.*] He contemned him upon three accounts : As being a Youth, unaccustomed to War : And being beautiful, seemed more fit to dance with Women, than to fight with Men : And he came also unarmed. See xvi. 12.

Ver. 43. *And the Philistine said, Am I a Dog, that thou comest to me with Stones ? and he cursed David by his gods.*] So the Romans were wont to do, saying, *Dii Deaque te perdent* : As *Goliath* it's likely now wish'd, that *Dagon* and *Astharoth* and the rest of his Gods would confound *David*.

Ver. 44. *And the Philistine said unto David, Come unto me, and I will give thy Flesh unto the Fowls of the Air, and to the Beasts of the Field.*] For in his hand *David* was no more than a little Lamb in the hand of a Butcher.

Ver. 45. *Then said David to the Philistine, Thou comest to me with a Sword, and with a Spear, and with a Shield : but I come to thee in the Name of the LORD of Hosts.*] By a Commission from him, who commands all Creatures in Heaven and Earth : And in a full Assurance that he will deliver thee into my hand. Concerning the Word *Chidon*, which we translate a *Spear*, see *Bochart* in his *Hierozeicon*. P. 1. p. 138.

*The God of the Armies of Israel, whom thou hast defied.*] The Leader and Protector of those Armies, whom *Goliath* had set at naught.

Ver. 46. *This day will the LORD deliver thee into my hand, and I will smite thee, and take thy Head off from thee.*] Which *Goliath* thought impossible, he having no Sword by his side.

*And will give the Carcases of the Host of the Philistines this day, unto the Fowls of the Air, and to the Beasts of the Earth.*] *David* did not rashly and vainly boast before-hand of the Victory, as *Goliath* had done : But being full of Faith (as *Pellicanus* here notes) praised the divine Omnipotence, and prophesied of an assured Victory.

*That all the Earth may know there is a God in Israel.*] Superior to all other.

Ver. 47. *And all this Assembly shall know that the LORD saveth not by Sword and by Spear.*] They might learn, if they pleased, that the LORD needed not human Force to effect his Designs. *David* did not want Courage : But he ascribes all to God ; in whose Power and Might he went forth, and not his own.

*For the Battel is the LORD's, and he will give you into our hand.*] The Battel was properly the LORD's against the seven Nations of *Canaan* : Because he had commanded them to be extirpated. But in all other Battels he disposed of the Victory as he pleased. *Strigelius* here notes out of *Sophocles* the Prophane Spirit of *Ajax* ; who was therefore punished with Madness : Because his Father *Telamon* piously admonishing him, as he went to War, to fight bravely, but to expect Victory from God ; he impiously answered, that *Cowards* might overcome by the help of God, but he doubted not to overcome without him.

Ver. 48. *And it came to pass when the Philistine arose, and came and drew near to meet David.*] Having nothing but Victory in his Thoughts, as *Pellicanus* here observes, he arose and marched gravely, and pompously covered over with Armour, and fearing nothing.

*That David basted and ran toward the Army to meet the Philistine.*] But *David* being loaded with no Armour, nimbly ran towards him, and knock'd him down ; before he had so much as drawn his Sword out of his Sheath.

Ver. 49. *And David put his hand in his Bag, and took thence a Stone, and smote the Philistine in his Forehead.*] Which either was bare, (he perhaps contemning *David* so much, as not to pull down his Helmet over his Face) or else was thrown with such a force, that it pierced his Helmet first, and then his Forehead : Or  
went



went in at the Place which was left open for his Eyes. However it was, the Divine Hand directed it: For though there were Men so wonderful skilful as to hit a Mark that was fixed and immoveable, though small and at a distance; yet none had such admirable Skill as to be sure to hit a Mark that was in motion, as *Goliath's* Body was at this time.

*And the Stone sunk into his Forehead.]* Pierced into his Brain, so that he immediately, as here follows, *fell upon his Face to the Earth.*

*Kimchi* thinks that when he said to *David*, *Come, and I will give thy Flesh to the Fowls of the Air*, he looked up, and his Helmet then fell from off his Head.

Ver. 50. *So David prevailed over the Philistine, with a Sling and with a Stone, and smote the Philistine, and slew him.]* So true is that of *Vegetius*, Lib. 1. Cap. 6. *Utilius est fortes esse milites, quam grandes.* But it was not mere Fortitude and Valour that prevailed, but the Spirit of God.

*But there was no Sword in the hand of David.]* This was so wonderful a thing, that so great a Victory should be obtained without the usual warlike Weapons, that it was thought fit a special Mark should be set upon it.

Ver. 51. *Therefore David ran, and stood upon the Philistine.]* That he might compleat his Victory, and make it notorious to all the Army.

*And took his Sword, and drew it out of its Sheath.]* He was strong not merely by Nature, but by the Power of God: Otherwise he could not have well managed the Sword of a Giant.

*And slew him, and cut off his Head therewith.]* It is likely the Stone had only stunned him; but his Life was still in him, after this Blow in his Forehead: And therefore now he quite dispatched him.

*And when the Philistines saw their Champion was dead, they fled.]* Having lost all their Courage with his Life.

Ver. 52. *And the Men of Israel and of Judah arose, and shouted.]* As they used to do when they had got the Victory.

*And pursued the Philistines, 'till they came to the Valley and to the Gates of Ekron, &c.]* They pursued them to their own Country (which was in a Valley) even to the Gates of their principal Cities; as *Gath* and *Ekron* were.

Ver. 53. *And the Children of Israel returned from chasing after the Philistines, and spoiled their Tents.]* They acted like good Soldiers; who did not first fall upon the Spoil, and thereby let the Enemy escape.

Ver. 54. *And David took the Head of the Philistine, and brought it to Jerusalem.]* After he had shown it to *Saul*, ver. 57. and exposed it to all the People, xviii. 6. *Jerusalem* was now become a noted City, which was the Reason, I suppose, why he brought his Head hither: Tho' it is only said, he brought it to that place; where it having been shown as a Spectacle, perhaps was repositied somewhere else.

*But he put his Armour in his Tent.]* Which, I suppose, was set up for *David*, upon this occasion; when he prepared himself to encounter the *Philistine*. And when his Tent was taken down after the Battel, the Armour was depo-

sited in the Tabernacle, as his Sword was, to remain there for a Trophy.

Ver. 55. *And when Saul saw David go forth against the Philistine, he said unto Abner the Captain of the Host, Whose Son is this Youth?] Such Cavillers as Spinoza* from hence argue, that this Chapter was not written by him, that wrote the former: For how is it possible, say they, that *Saul* should not know *David*, who had lately attended on him in his Court? But this is very frivolous; for in such a Multitude of Business as Kings have, and among so many new Faces, which they see every day, it was easy to forget a Man he had seen and conversed withal now and then; especially when he was crazed, and had a Disease in his Head, as *Saul* had. Besides, *David* came now in another kind of Apparel, than he did when he was sent to wait upon *Saul* at Court: For he appeared now as a Shepherd, in a rustick Habit (ver. 40.) and his Countenance, it is likely, was much altered, by the Heroic Motion he now found in himself, to fight with *Goliath*. And after all, *Abner* observes, he doth not ask who *David* was, but who was his Father: Which he might easily forget when he had been disturbed with Melancholly, and with the public Affairs.

*And Abner said, As thy Soul liveth, O King, I cannot tell.]* He being a military Man, and therefore much abroad, had not seen *David* when he was at Court, or taken no notice of him.

Ver. 56. *And the King said, Enquire then whose Son this Stripling is.]* It was natural to desire to know whence such a young Man came, who so much excelled all other Men.

Ver. 57. *And as David returned from the Slaughter of the Philistine, Abner took him, and brought him unto Saul, with the Head of the Philistine in his hand.]* He thought it was best the King should learn from his own Mouth, who he was; especially after such a glorious Exploit.

Ver. 58. *And Saul said, Whose Son art thou, thou young Man? and David answered, I am the Son of thy Servant Jesse, the Bethlemite.]* More Discourse, no doubt, passed between them, as appears by the next words; but this was all that was proper to be recorded, in answer to *Saul's* Question.

## C H A P. XVIII.

Ver. 1. **A**ND it came to pass, when he had made an end of speaking unto *Saul*, that the Soul of *Jonathan* was knit unto the Soul of *David*, and he loved him as his own Soul.] Such was the Prudence and Modesty of his Discourse and Behaviour after such an Heroic Action, that he entirely gained *Jonathan's* Affection.

Ver. 2. *And Saul took him that day, and would let him go no more to his Father's House.]* *Saul* also resolved to show greater Respect and Kindness unto him than before. For it appears by this that he had not lived always at Court, after he came first thither; but often went to his Father, when *Saul* was well and had no use of him.



Ver. 3. *Then Jonathan and David made a Covenant.]* Solemnly entred into a mutual Friendship.

*Because he loved him as his own Soul.]* Such excellent Men there were among the Heathen, between whom there was  $\zeta\epsilon\upsilon\sigma\tau\omicron\varsigma$   $\phi\iota\lambda\iota\alpha\varsigma$ , as *Plutarch* calls it, a *Yoke of Friendship*, wherein they were so joined together in Love and Amity, as to have one common Interest. He mentions (in his Book  $\pi\epsilon\pi\epsilon\iota$   $\pi\omicron\lambda\upsilon\phi\iota\lambda\iota\alpha\varsigma$ ) *Theseus* and *Perithous*; *Achilles* and *Patroclus*; *Orestes* and *Pylades*; *Pythias* and *Damon*; *Epaminondas* and *Pelopidas*: But none of them comparable to these two, *Jonathan* and *David*; who entred into the most sacred Bonds of mutual Assistance and Defence to the very Death; and Kindness to their Posterity after either of them was dead. Which was a singular Providence of God, who by this means preserved *David*, in that sharp Persecution, which shortly after arose against him at Court.

Ver. 4. *And Jonathan stript himself of the Robe that was upon him, and gave it unto David.]* That he might appear like a Courtier.

*And his Garments, even to his Sword, and to his Bow, and to his Girdle.]* That he might look like another *Jonathan*; and all might take notice, they were no longer two, but one. For he put him into the Garb, both of a Courtier, and of a Soldier; or rather, great Commander.

Ver. 5. *And David went out whithersoever Saul sent him.]* Upon military Expeditions: None of which he refused, tho' ever so hazardous.

*And he behaved himself wisely.]* Showed as much Prudence in his Conduct, as he did Courage.

*And Saul set him over the Men of War.]* Not over all; for *Abner* was General, as we speak, of all his Forces: But he made him Captain of his Guard; or gave him some other great Command in his Army.

*And he was accepted in the sight of all the People, and also in the sight of Saul's Servants.]* Except a few; who envied his Preferment.

Ver. 6. *And it came to pass, as they came.]* Marched along, in a great Cavalcade (as they now speak) from the place of Battel.

*When David returned from the Slaughter of the Philistine.]* I suppose, *Saul* and the whole Court thought fit to honour *David*, by accompanying him to *Jerusalem*, when he carried *Goliath's* Head thither.

*The Women came out of all the Cities of Israel.]* All the neighbouring Cities.

*Singing and dancing to meet King Saul, with Tabrets, with Joy, and with Instruments of Musick.]* As the custom was in times of great rejoicing.

Ver. 7. *And the Women answered one to another, as they played.]* They sang as well as played on musical Instruments: And they sang alternately, as they did *Exod. xv. 21.* And the burden of the Song seems to have been that which follows.

*And said, Saul hath slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands.]* For his slaying *Goliath*, was the cause of the Flight of the Army of the *Philistines*, and the great Slaughter of them.

Ver. 8. *And Saul was very wroth, and the Saying displeased him; and he said, they have ascribed unto David ten thousands, and to me they have ascribed but thousands; and what can he have more, but the Kingdom?] He began to be jealous they would advance him to the Throne, in a little time; having so highly magnified him above their King.*

Ver. 9. *And Saul eyed David from that day forward.]* Narrowly observed him, whether he had any such design to make himself King: Or, as it is commonly interpreted, he looked askew upon him, as one he envied and hated, and was afraid of; as the *LXX* translate it.

Ver. 10. *And it came to pass on the morrow, that the evil Spirit from God came upon Saul.]* Which had formerly haunted him, *xvi. 14.* and now by his Discontent, Anger and Melancholy was brought again upon him.

*And he prophesied in the midst of the House.]* Before the whole Court. This prophesying is generally understood, only of his imitating the Motions, Actions and Gestures of the Prophets; which sometimes were very different from those of other Men (see *2 Kings ix. 11.*) But I do not see why this Word should not retain the Signification here, which it hath in other places: That he sung divine Songs. Which perhaps he the rather did; that *David* might suspect no danger from him. *Abarbinel* thinks, that his Mind being disturbed with various roving Thoughts about his own Condition, and about *David*, he foretold that *David* should be Heir of his Kingdom.

*And David played with his band as at other times.]* To compose and quiet his disturbed Spirits.

*And there was a Favelin in Saul's hand.]* Which he had provided on purpose, as the following words show, to dispatch *David*.

Ver. 11. *And Saul cast the Favelin, for he said, I will smite David even to the Wall with it.]* This argued he was so full of Fury, that he design'd to kill him in his own House, before all his Courtiers, when *David* was waiting upon him, and doing him Service.

*And David avoided out of his presence twice.]* Had his Eye upon him, and shunned the Blow both now, and at another time mentioned *xix. 10.*

Ver. 12. *And Saul was afraid of David, because the LORD was with him, and was departed from Saul.]* Who was as unsuccessful in all his Designs, as *David* was prosperous.

Ver. 13. *Therefore Saul removed him from him.]* From his Court.

*And made him a Captain over a thousand.]* Instead of Captain of his Guard (which required his Attendance at Court) he gave him a Command abroad: Where he hoped he might be killed in some Expedition; or he might have an opportunity privately to take away his Life.

*And he went out and came in before the People.]* As the Leader of that thousand Men.

Ver. 14. *And David behaved himself wisely in all his ways.]* None could find any fault in his Conduct, whithersoever he went.

*And the LORD was with him.]* Made all his Undertakings prosperous.

Ver.



Ver. 15. *Wherefore when Saul saw that he behaved himself very wisely, he was afraid of him.]* His Fears increased, as he saw David still grow so prudent, that no Exception could be taken to his Behaviour.

Ver. 16. *But all Israel and Judah loved David.]* This is to be understood (as Corn. Bertram thinks, *de Repub. Jud. c. x.*) as if he had said, the Israelites in general loved David, but especially they of the Tribe of Judah.

*Because he went out and came in before them.]* This Phrase signifies in other places, to administer all things belonging to one's Charge with full Authority. So Moses speaks of himself, *Deut. xxxi. 2.* and of Joshua his Successor, *Numb. xxvii. 21.* And so I suppose it signifies here, that David had an absolute Power under Saul, over those whom he commanded: And managed it so well, that he gained every body's Affection.

Ver. 17. *And Saul said to David, Behold my elder Daughter Merab, her will I give thee to Wife.]* He at last bethinks himself of the Promise he had publicly made unto him that should kill Goliath. The performance of which David did not demand, but in Modesty left it to Saul's own Conscience: Who now intended nothing less, it appears by the sequel, than to be as good as his word.

*Only be thou valiant for me, and fight the LORD's Battels.]* He would not have him think upon this Marriage, of coming again to live at Court: But to continue a military Life, and fight for his Country; whereby he hoped to be rid of him.

*For Saul said, Let not mine hand be upon him.]* Now he seems to have some Sense of Honour, and to lay aside those base Thoughts of murdering him himself.

*But let the hand of the Philistines be upon him.]* By whose hand, God's just Judgment so ordered things, that Saul himself fell.

Ver. 18. *And David said unto Saul, Who am I, and what is my Life?] The* hazarding his Life, he tells him, could not deserve so high an advancement.

*And what is my Family in Israel, that I should be Son-in-law to the King?] This* was not a Refusal of the Honour, but an acknowledgment how unworthy he was of it.

Ver. 19. *And it came to pass at the time when Merab, Saul's Daughter, should have been given to David.]* When all things were ready for the Marriage.

*That she was given to Adriel, the Meholathite, to Wife.]* A most high Affront to David, and the greatest Injury that could have been done him: which he wisely dissembled. How Jonathan resented this Usage we are not told. It is likely, his Duty to his Father made him intreat David to take it patiently; and to look upon Saul, as one that was sometimes beside himself, and did not know what he did.

Ver. 20. *And Michal, Saul's Daughter, loved David, and they told Saul; and the thing pleased him.]* Not out of any love to David, or desire to perform his Promise: But because he hoped by her means to bring his ends about, of destroying David.

Ver. 21. *And Saul said, I will give him her, that she may be a Snare to him: and that the hand of the Philistines may be against him.]* He hoped his Daughter, in obedience to him, might be persuaded to bring him into some Snare that he would lay for him: Or, that being exposed to great dangers (which he was to undergo, as a Condition of having her to Wife) he might perish in some of them.

*Wherefore Saul said unto David, Thou shalt be this day my Son-in-law.]* That is shortly, within a time, it is likely, prefixed by Saul.

*In the one of the twain.]* By marrying one of his Daughters. He had two; and tho' he was disappointed in one of them, yet his Promise was fulfilled, if he married the other.

Ver. 22. *And Saul commanded his Servants, saying, Commune with David secretly.]* It seems David was not forward to embrace Saul's Offer; having been so grossly abused: Therefore Saul ordered his Courtiers in private discourse to take occasion to persuade him to it.

*And say, Behold, the King hath delight in thee, and his Servants love thee; now therefore be the King's Son-in-law.]* The Affection of the King and of the whole Court, was a mighty Argument to induce him to it.

Ver. 23. *And Saul's Servants spake these words in the Ears of David; and David said, Seemeth it a light thing unto you, to be a King's Son-in-law: seeing I am a poor Man and little esteemed?] Having* no Estate, and of small Credit: And therefore unable to endow her according to her Quality.

Ver. 24. *And the Servants of Saul told him, saying, in this manner spake David.]* In the Hebrew, according unto these words; that is, they reported his words faithfully; that he was as sensible of his own Meanness, as of the Honour that was offered him.

Ver. 25. *And Saul said, Thus shall ye say to David, the King desireth not any Dowry; but an hundred Foreskins of the Philistines, to be avenged of his Enemies.]* This Custom hath prevailed in latter times in some Countries, to give their Daughters in Marriage to the most valiant Men; or those who should bring them so many Heads of their Enemies. *Alex. ab Alexandro* reports of a People in *Carmania*, that if any were desirous to marry, it was necessary he should first bring the King the Head of an Enemy, *Lib. 1. Cap. 24.* *Vincent le Blanc* reports the like of others, *P. 1. Chap. 30.* But why did Saul desire the Foreskins of the Philistines, and not their Heads? To this *Procopius Gazæus* answers, that Saul did not know but David might cut off the Heads of his own Subjects, and bring them instead of the Philistines, and therefore he ask'd so many Foreskins, which the Israelites had not, that he might be sure he had killed so many Enemies. As for Portions, the Hebrew Custom was not like that of the Romans, who required the Wife to bring a Portion to her Husband, *ut onera matrimonii tanto æquius sustineat*, that he might be able to bear the Charges of Matrimony more equally. But among the Hebrews the Husband endowed the Wife, and received nothing at all with her. And so the Custom was among the People of that Land before they came into Canaan. For *Sichem*



bad *Dinah's* Relations require what Dowry they pleased, and it should be settled upon her, he desiring nothing of them but her, *Gen. xxxix. 17.* And so it was in the case of *David.* See *Wagenfeil* upon *Sota*, cap. iv.

But *Saul* thought to make *David* fall by the hand of the *Philistines.*] Who he knew would be extremely enraged against *David*, by putting this great Indignity upon them, as they all counted it, of cutting off their Foreskins.

Ver. 26. *And when his Servants told David these words, it pleased David well to be the King's Son-in-Law.*] In the Hebrew the words are, *the thing was right in David's eyes*; that is, he thought fit to accept the Offer upon these Conditions.

*And the days were not expired.*] Which were appointed to be fulfilled (as it is in the Hebrew) before the Marriage took effect: so that he had time to perform what was agreed, instead of a Dowry.

Ver. 27. *Wherefore David arose, and went, and his Men, and slew of the Philistines two hundred Men, and brought their Foreskins, and they gave them in full tale to the King, that he might be the King's Son-in-Law.*] He gave *Saul* double of what he demanded: partly to show his sense of the Honour he had done him, and partly to express his Love to his Daughter, and to declare his Intention to venture his Life freely to do him service.

*And Saul gave him Michal his Daughter to Wife.*] There being no way to avoid it, after the Marriage had been so solemnly treated and ratified.

Ver. 28. *And Saul saw and knew that the LORD was with David.*] He was convinced of it, by the success which he constantly gave him.

*And that Michal Saul's Daughter loved him.*] Which was a great Disappointment to him.

Ver. 29. *And Saul was yet the more afraid of David.*] Having thus advanced him; and seeing no hope of bringing his Designs to pass against him.

*And Saul became David's Enemy continually.*] He was every day more resolved to destroy him. Such strange Blindness, did his Anger and Hatred, and such like Passions, bring upon him; that he set himself against him, who he saw and knew had God for his Friend.

Ver. 30. *And the Princes of the Philistines went forth.*] To fight with the *Israelites*: Who had highly incensed them by *David's* late Action, as well as by former Losses. And they thought perhaps, that *David* would make use of the Benefit the Law allowed, *Deut. xxiv. 25.* of not going to War in a Year after he was married.

*And it came to pass after they went forth, that David behaved himself more wisely than all the Servants of Saul.*] By discovering, I suppose, the Designs of the *Philistines*, and preventing them: For we do not read, that they came to a Battel.

*So that his Name was much set by.*] He was very highly esteemed.

## C H A P. XIX.

Ver. 1. **A**ND *Saul* spake to *Jonathan* his Son, and to all his Servants, that they

should kill *David.*] When he could not destroy him by Craft, he declares open Enmity to him; and commands his Son and his whole Court to make him away: some of which he thought would obey him. It is strange that he should speak to *Jonathan* to murder *David*, if he knew the Friendship he had for him; and he could not well be ignorant of it, since he had so publicly declared it, as we read, xviii. 3, 4. But he imagined his Love to a Father, would overcome his Love to a Friend. And there was a great Providence of God in his disclosing his Mind so freely to *Jonathan*, whereby *David* came to be certainly informed of his danger.

Ver. 2. *And Jonathan Saul's Son delighted much in David.*] He continued to take much delight in his Company: And therefore would not lose the pleasure of his Friendship, by suffering him to be killed.

*And Jonathan told David, saying, My Father seeketh to kill thee, now therefore I pray thee take heed to thy self until the Morning; and abide in a secret place, and hide thy self.*] He hoped, I suppose, to find his Father better disposed in the Morning: And in the mean time would have *David* secure himself in some close place, where no body could find him.

Ver. 3. *And I will go out.*] The next Morning.

*And stand beside my Father in the Field.*] In which, it is likely, *Saul* used to walk in the Morning, and take the fresh Air. Thereabouts he advised *David* to lurk, in some secret place; that he might speedily acquaint him with the Issue of his Discourse with his Father.

*And I will commune with my Father concerning thee, and what I see, that I will tell thee.*] Let him know how he left his Father inclined.

Ver. 4. *And Jonathan spake good of David unto Saul his Father.*] A noble Act of Friendship to adventure to commend him to one, who was his declared Enemy.

*And said unto him, Let not the King sin against his Servant, against David: because he hath not sinned against thee, and because his Work hath been to thee ward very good.*] He represented to him, what a Sin and Dishonour it would be to kill such a faithful Servant as *David* had been: who never offended him; but studied by all good Offices to please him.

Ver. 5. *And he did put his Life in his hand, and slew the Philistine.*] Especially he puts him in mind of that hazardous Enterprize, wherein he slew *Goliath*.

*And the LORD wrought a great Salvation for all Israel.*] By which means the whole Realm was delivered out of their Enemies hand.

*Thou sawest it, and didst rejoice.*] He desires him to remember that he himself was a Witness of it; and could not then but applaud *David*, and rejoice in what God had done by him.

*Wherefore then wilt thou sin against innocent Blood, and slay David without a Cause?*] Having mollified *Saul* by so many Arguments, he beseeches him to revoke the Order he had given (ver. 1.) and in downright Terms tells him, if he did not, he would bring innocent Blood upon his own head.



Ver. 6. *And Saul hearkened to the Voice of Jonathan, and Saul sware, As the LORD liveth, he shall not be slain.*] Some think he sware deceitfully; that Jonathan believing he had no ill Intentions towards David, might not perswade him to fly, but bring him to Court again, where he might have an Opportunity to kill him. But I rather think he spake what he really meant at this present: Tho' this Alteration proceeding not from any Affection he bare to David, but from a Sense (which Jonathan's Discourse had wrought in him) how base a thing it would be, to slay a Man of such Worth, and who had done him such Service, he soon forgot it, and returned to his old bent.

Ver. 7. *And Jonathan called David, and Jonathan shewed him all these things: and Jonathan brought David unto Saul; and he was in his presence as in times past.*] When he was in his Favour.

Ver. 8. *And there was War again, and David went out and fought with the Philistines, and slew them with a great Slaughter, and they fled from him.*] All these Battels were only between Parties, for David commanded no more than a thousand Men, xviii. 13. And if the whole Army of the Philistines had been gathered together, Abner would have commanded the Army of Israel against them; for he was Captain of the Host.

Ver. 9. *And the evil Spirit from the LORD was upon Saul, and he sat in his House with his Favelin in his hand.*] The more Services David did his Country, the more did Saul's Hatred and Malice increase against him. For this new Victory, in all likelihood, made him melancholy and mad to see him so prosperous.

*And David played with his band.*] He did not omit his Duty to Saul, tho' he knew his Danger.

Ver. 10. *And Saul sought to smite David to the Wall with his Favelin, but he slipt away out of Saul's presence, and he smote the Favelin into the Wall.*] His Wrath and Fury made him forget his Oath: So dangerous it is to be possessed with such Passions.

*And David fled, and escaped that Night.*] He got out of the Palace, before Saul's Order (which it is likely he gave) could be executed, to apprehend him.

Ver. 11. *Saul also sent Messengers unto David's House to watch him, and to slay him in the Morning.*] As he went out of the Door of his House. By this it is apparent when Saul missed his Blow, he was the more enraged, and implacably pursued his Destruction.

*And Michal David's Wife told him, saying, If thou save not thy Life to-night, to-morrow thou shalt be slain.*] She had Intelligence either from her Brother Jonathan, or some other Friend at Court: Or perhaps she saw suspicious Persons hovering about the House.

Ver. 12. *So Michal let down David thro' a Window.*] Which did not look towards any of the Doors which were narrowly watched.

*And he went, and fled, and escaped.*] Having most of the Night, it is likely, to travel in.

Ver. 13. *And Michal took an Image.*] In the Hebrew, a *Teraphim*. But it doth not signify

such as were made for a superstitious use (which David would not have suffered in his House) but a simple Image of a Man's Head; such as we now use for Blocks, whereon to comb our Perukes. *Abarbinel* thinks (whom *Abendana* follows) that Women were wont, in those days, to make such Figures in the likeness of their Husbands; that when they were absent from them, they might have them in their Image, to look upon them, as still present with them. Of which sort of *Teraphim* (which were Images in the likeness of Men) was this of *Michal's*; who dearly loving her Husband, had got one made in his likeness. But whatsoever becomes of this, the Conceit that *Teraphim* were little Puppets (as I may call them) which the High-Priest had in his Breast-plate (called *Urim* and *Thummin*) is plainly destroyed. For this Place shows that *Teraphim* were a large Image representing a Man: And therefore fitter for a Bed, than for a Breast-plate.

*And laid it in the Bed.*] Where David was wont to lie.

*And put a Pillow of Goats-hair for his Bolster.*] It is hard to determine what the word *Cebir* signifies, which we translate *Pillow*. For there is great Variety of Opinions among Interpreters about it. But *Bochartus* hath with much Probability resolved that it signifies *great*: And the meaning is, she put a great deal of Goats-hair upon his Bolster. For tho' the word *Goats* is only mentioned in the *Hebrew*, yet the word *Hair* must be supplied, as a great many other places of Scripture testify. See his *Hierozyicon*, P. 1. Lib. 2. Cap. 51. pag. 623. For in those Countries Goats had long Hair, which was shorn as the Wool of Sheep is, and served for many uses: And it is not unlike Man's Hair, as he there observes. It was also of divers Colours, so that she might chuse some fine Goats-hair (which was ready at hand, being used to be spun) of the same Colour with David's.

*And covered it with a Cloth.*] As if David had been sick.

Ver. 14. *And when Saul sent Messengers to take David.*] He not coming out of doors, where they watched for him, Saul sent other Messengers to take him in his House.

*She said he was sick.*] Her Affection to David made her tell an Untruth; whereby he gained more time to get to a place of Safety.

Ver. 15. *And Saul sent Messengers again, to see David.*] As if they came to visit him, and see how he did.

*Saying, Bring him to me in the Bed that I may slay him.*] Such was his insatiable Rage, that he could not stay to see whether he would die of his Sickness; but when he was able to make no Resistance, resolved to dispatch him.

Ver. 16. *And when the Messengers were come in, behold, there was an Image in the Bed, with a Pillow of Goats-hair for his Bolster.*] An Image dressed up with Goats-hair, resembling a Man.

Ver. 17. *And Saul said unto Michal, Wherefore hast thou deceived me so, and sent away mine Enemy, and he is escaped?*] He did not expect to be served so by a Daughter, whom he had married to David, that she might betray him.



*And Michal answered Saul, He said unto me, Let me go: why should I kill thee? ]* This was another Fiction of her own: For it is not likely that she endeavoured to detain him, or that he threatned to kill her if she did.

Ver. 18. *So David fled, and came to Samuel to Ramah, and told him of all that Saul had done unto him. And he and Samuel went and dwelt in Naioth]* A Place near to Ramah, as the next Verse shows.

Ver. 19. *And it was told Saul, Behold David is at Naioth in Ramah.]* Ramah seems to have been the Place from whence Samuel was descended, called (in the first Chapter, ver. 1.) Ramathaim Zophim, for the reason I gave there. And Naioth was a neighbouring Place belonging to it, and perhaps the Suburbs of it. Where the Sons of the Prophets either had their ordinary Residence, or were wont sometimes to retire thither for greater Privacy.

Ver. 20. *And Saul sent Messengers to take David.]* His implacable Hatred had abolished all Respect and Reverence to Samuel (under whose Protection David now was) and to the College of the Prophets, which was a kind of Sanctuary, unto those who fled to it.

*And when they saw the Company of the Prophets prophesying, and Samuel standing as appointed over them.]* To govern them.

*The Spirit of the LORD came also upon the Messengers of Saul, and they also prophesied.]* That is, praised God in Hymns; which the Prophets composed and sang to him, 1 Chron. xxv. 1, 2, 4.

Ver. 22. *And when it was told Saul, he sent other Messengers, and they prophesied likewise; and Saul sent again the third time, and they prophesied also.]* A strange Obstinacy, to contend so long with the Spirit of God: Who quite diverted the Minds of his Messengers from David, by inspiring them with Divine Thoughts.

Ver. 22. *Then went he also unto Ramah.]* Not out of Devotion, but to destroy David.

*And came to a great Well that is in Sechu.]* Where Company commonly was, to fetch Water.

*And he asked and said, Where are Samuel and David? and they answered and said, Behold they be at Naioth in Ramah.]* It is a probable Opinion of Corn. Pellicanus, that Naioth signifies the Habitation or College, where the Prophets dwelt in Ramah.

Ver. 23. *And he went thither to Naioth in Ramah.]* He directed his Way toward that Place.

*And the Spirit of the LORD came upon him also, and he went on prophesying until he came to Naioth in Ramah.]* His Messengers did not prophesy till they came thither; but God inspired Saul as he was on the way unto that Place: So that from Sechu, I suppose, till he came there, his evil Spirit was gone, and he praised God as the Prophets did. This was to convince him, that he laboured in a vain pursuit after David, whom the Spirit of God powerfully defended.

Ver. 24. *And he stript off his Clothes also.]* His Royal Robes (as R. Solomon and other Jewish Doctors expound it) appearing like an ordinary

Man; or perhaps in the Prophetical Habit. Or it may be meant only of his upper Garment, whatsoever it was. For when the Germans are said by some to have appeared naked, Tacitus interprets it *rejecta veste superiore*, throwing off their upper Garment. But the first I take to be the truest Account; and as Procopius Gazæus here notes, *Habitus ille regni ablationem significabat*, that throwing off his Royal Habit signifies the taking away his Kingdom from him.

*And prophesied before Samuel in like manner.]* This seems to denote, that his Messengers had also stripp'd themselves when they prophesied. And Abarbinet will have it, that they all still foretold the Crown should be set upon the Head of David.

*And lay down naked all that day, and all that night.]* As a Man in an Ecstasy, that had not the use of his Senses. But by *naked* is meant only, as before, stripp'd of his Royal Robe.

*Wherefore they say, Is Saul also among the Prophets? ]* This gave occasion to renew the Proverbial Saying, which had been in use long before. See x. 12.

## C H A P. XX.

Ver. 1. **A**ND David fled from Naioth in Ramah, and came and said before Jonathan.] By Saul's being thrown into a Trance (mentioned in the Verse foregoing) God's Providence gave David time to escape; and he went from thence to Gibeah, where Jonathan was.

*What have I done? And what is mine Iniquity? And what is my Sin before thy Father, that he seeketh my Life? ]* Such violent and unwearied Persecution must arise from some extraordinary Cause or other; which he desires to know: For he could not accuse himself of any kind of Fault, that should embitter Saul against him.

Ver. 2. *And he said, God forbid, thou shalt not die.]* He would have him think there was no such danger as he suspected.

*Behold, my Father will do nothing, either great or small, but he will show it me; and why should my Father hide this from me? it is not so.]* These Words signify that Jonathan knew nothing of his Father's Design; and that he had sent the Messengers fore-named, without his privity, to seize David. Yet it is strange he should not know of his sending to his House to apprehend him. Therefore some think Jonathan, out of dutiful Affection to his Father, dissembled the matter: and would not have David think him so very wicked as he was.

Ver. 3. *And David sware moreover and said.]* That it was certainly so.

*Thy Father certainly knoweth that I have found grace in thine eyes, and he saith, let not Jonathan know this, lest he be grieved.]* He was willing to believe that Saul might conceal his Intentions from Jonathan; for the Reason here mentioned.

*But truly, as the LORD liveth, and as thy Soul liveth, there is but a Step between me and Death.]* But by a most solemn Oath, he endeavours to persuade him, that he was in extream danger of losing his Life.

Ver.



Ver. 4. *Then said Jonathan to David, Whatsoever thy Soul desireth, I will even do it for thee.]* Both to find out Saul's Intentions, and to save David's Life.

Ver. 5. *And David said unto Jonathan, To-morrow is the new Moon, and I should not fail to sit with the King at Meat.]* There were solemn Sacrifices every new Moon, and then a Feast upon them. And David being one of the King's Family, by marrying his Daughter, used to eat with him at these Festival Times: And he thought it possible, that Saul, who lately pursued him in a fit of Rage, when the evil Spirit was upon him, might now be mitigated by the Spirit of God coming upon him at *Naiotb*: And so might enquire after him, and receive him into Favour again, as he had formerly done. But he durst not trust to this Opinion, till he had tried his Mind and Affection to him, after the manner here propounded.

*But let me go, that I may hide my self in the Field.]* He desires, with his Approbation, to retire to his Father's House, and the Field thereabouts, with which he was well acquainted.

*Till the third day at even.]* That is, till the next Day but one, after the New Moon, as appears from ver. 27, 35.

Ver. 6. *If thy Father at all miss me, then say, David earnestly asked leave of me that he might run to Bethlehem, his City; for there is a yearly Sacrifice there for all the Family.]* It is likely this was the custom among pious Families to meet together once a Year, and praise God for his Mercies towards them all.

Ver. 7. *If he say thus, It is well, thy Servant shall have peace: but if he be very wroth, then be sure that Evil is determined by him.]* If he approved of Jonathan's Licence, he might hope he was pacified: But if he still stormed and raged, he might probably conclude his Destruction was decreed, and that his Hatred continued so implacably, that he must be forced to leave his Country.

Ver. 8. *Therefore thou shalt deal kindly with thy Servant.]* In giving him a faithful Account how he found his Father disposed towards him.

*For thou hast brought thy Servant into a Covenant of the LORD with thee.]* It was Jonathan's motion, that they should make a solemn Covenant before God (who is the Avenger of all Falseness) of mutual Friendship, xviii. 3.

*Notwithstanding, if there be in me Iniquity, slay me thy self: for why shouldst thou bring me to thy Father?] A marvellous Assurance of his Integrity, which made him freely offer himself to die, without troubling his Father any further, if he knew any Guilt in him.*

Ver. 9. *And Jonathan said, Far be it from thee.]* Do not speak after this manner.

*For if I knew certainly that evil was determined by my Father, to come upon thee, then would not I tell it thee?] He disclaims all Thoughts either of killing him himself, or letting him fall into the hands of his Father, if he could prevent it. For who could imagine a Man so solemnly engaged, and who had already shown himself*

*such a faithful Friend, would not discover any Design he knew against him?*

Ver. 10. *And David said, Who shall tell me?] He desired to know who should bring him Advice how matters stood.*

*And what if thy Father answer thee roughly?] And not suffer thee to come to me thy self.*

Ver. 11. *And Jonathan said unto David, Come, let us go into the Field; and they went both of them into the Field.]* To take their measures about this matter.

Ver. 12. *And Jonathan said unto David, O LORD God of Israel, when I have sounded my Father any time to-morrow, or the third day, and behold, if there be Good towards David, and I then send not unto thee, and shew it thee.]* The first Words seem to be an Exclamation: And the rest, as if he had said, Shall I who love thee so much, be thought capable of breaking my word with thee? All these Verses are full of Passion; and the Words are broken, concise, and interrupt: As the Words of Lovers are wont to be, especially when they are disturbed.

Ver. 13. *And the LORD do so, and much more to Jonathan: but if it please my Father to do thee evil, then I will shew it thee, and send thee away, that thou mayest go in peace: and the LORD be with thee, as he hath been with my Father.]* In this case he advises him to get away, and preserve himself as well as he could: Praying God to make him as successful as his Father had been; and bring him to the Kingdom.

Ver. 14. *And thou shalt not only while I yet live, shew me the Kindness of the LORD.]* The Kindness promised him before the LORD, or the greatest Kindness. The Words in the Hebrew run plainly thus, *and wilt thou not if I be then alive, (viz. when God had advanced him to the Throne, as he did his Father) wilt thou not shew me the Loving-kindness of the LORD?* He made no doubt, but rather strongly affirmed his Belief of it.

*That I die not.]* After the manner of those Kings, who were wont to cut off the Children of their Predecessors: Unto whose Throne they were advanced.

Ver. 15. *But also thou shalt not cut off thy Kindness from my House for ever.]* The Covenant they had made was not merely personal, but reached to their Posterity.

*No not when the LORD hath cut off the Enemies of David, every one from the Face of the Earth.]* When he had the greatest Power, and none to oppose his Will.

Ver. 16. *So Jonathan made a Covenant with the House of David, saying, Let the LORD even requite it at the hand of David's Enemies.]* They had made a League of personal Friendship, a little after the Slaughter of Goliath: And now they make a Friendship between their Families; and Jonathan wished that God would requite it, if any of his Family proved David's Enemies. This he renewed afterwards, and added farther Articles to the League, that Jonathan should be next to himself, xxiii. 18.

Ver. 17. *And Jonathan caused David to swear again, because he loved him.]* Or he made him swear again by the Love he bare to him.

*For he loved him as he loved his own Soul.]* The greatness of his Love to him, made him think



think, he could never do enough to secure his Friendship to all Generations.

Ver. 18. *Then Jonathan said unto David, to-morrow is the new Moon, and thou shalt be missed, because thy Seat will be empty.*] The place where he used to sit with Saul at Table.

Ver. 19. *And when thou hast stayed three days, then thou shalt go down quickly.*] It is commonly interpreted, of staying so long with his Kindred at Bethlehem, or some other place of Retirement. But in the Hebrew the Words are; *thou shalt three times (or three days) go down to a very low place*: And the meaning seems to be, that if Jonathan did not come the first day, he should take it for granted he knew nothing; and come again the second; and if he brought him no News then, come the third.

*And come to the place where thou didst hide thyself, when the Business was in hand.*] When they were discoursing of this very matter; how to discover Saul's Affection toward David. Or, when he did David's Business with his Father, and interceded so effectually for him, that Saul promised not to kill him.

*And thou shalt remain by the Stone Ezel.*] It is thought to be a Stone that showed Men their way, where several Roads met: Because the word imports going or travelling.

Ver. 20. *And I will shoot three Arrows, as thou I shot at a mark.*] For when he came, there might be Passengers going to and fro: which would deprive them of the Privacy they desired. Therefore this seems to have been given as a sign that the Coast was clear.

Ver. 21. *And behold, I will send a Lad, saying, Go find out the Arrows; if I expressly say to the Lad, behold the Arrows are on this side of thee, take them, and come thou; for there is peace to thee and no hurt, as the LORD liveth.*] So that he might surely appear, and show himself.

Ver. 22. *But if I say thus unto the young Man, behold, the Arrows are beyond thee; go thy way: for the LORD hath sent thee away.*] He would not have him venture to discover himself; but look upon this as a sign that God would not have him appear at Court.

Ver. 23. *And as touching the matter, that thou and I have spoken of; behold, the LORD is between me and thee for ever.*] As a Witness, and an Avenger, if we keep not the Covenant we have made of perpetual Friendship.

Ver. 24. *So David hid himself in the Field: and when the new Moon was come, the King sat him down to eat Meat.*] He did not immediately hide himself in the Field, but when the time came that he had appointed: For he first went to Bethlehem, ver. 6, 28.

Ver. 25. *And the King sat upon his Seat, as at other times, even upon a Seat by the Wall.*] The Israelites sat at Meat (as did the Greeks and Romans in after-times) in a Half-Round, or Circle: Which they called *Sigma*, from the antient Figure of that Letter, which was thus, C. Now the middle place, in this fashion of sitting, was most honourable among this People, as our Mr. Thorndike gathers from this very place. Upon which R. Solomon saith, *Saul sat in the head of the Couch next the Wall.* For supposing them to sit in a Round, or Half-Circle, as the manner always was, we must needs conceive

that the back or middle of this Half-Circle must be towards the Wall, for all Conveniencies. See his *Religious Assemblies*, p. 62. It may be also here observed, that the custom of lying along, leaning on their Elbows, was not yet introduced, in these ancient times; but they sat at Meat as we do. See Bochartus, *Hieroicoicon*, P. 1. Lib. 2. cap. 5. p. 598.

*And Jonathan arose.*] When his Father came into the Room: And after Saul had taken his place, it is likely, sat on his right hand.

*And Abner sat by Saul's side.*] On his left hand, I suppose, being his Cousin, and the General of his Army.

*And David's place was empty.*] Which, it is probable, was next to Abner's.

Ver. 26. *Nevertheless Saul spake not any thing that day.*] Made no enquiry after David.

*For he thought something is befallen him; he is not clean, surely he is not clean.*] What this *Mikrah*, or *Accident* signifies, which we translate *something hath befallen him*, see upon Levit. xv. 16.

Ver. 27. *And it came pass that on the morrow, which was the second day of the Month, that David's place was empty; and Saul said unto Jonathan his Son, wherefore cometh not the Son of Jesse.*] His calling him the Son of Jesse argued both Scorn and Displeasure against him.

*To meat, neither yesterday, nor to-day?*] By this it appears, the Jews anciently observed two days, in the beginning of every Month, with Festival Joy. The Reason was, because the New Moon being proclaimed according to its Appearance, and it appearing unequally, sometimes in the Afternoon, sometimes in the Evening, sometimes at Midnight, therefore they observed two days, as Scaliger and others have observed. And they who were not clean the first day, might observe the second: For that sort of Uncleaness here spoken of, lasted but one day.

Ver. 28. *And Jonathan answered Saul, David earnestly asked leave of me to go to Bethlehem.*] Which he, being next to the King, had power, I suppose, to grant: As appears from his demanding of Jonathan an Account what was become of him.

Ver. 29. *And he said, let me go, I pray thee, for my Family hath a Sacrifice in the City, and my Brother be hath commanded me to be there.*] The eldest Brother let all the rest know that their Company was expected.

*Now, if I have found grace in thine Eyes, let me go away, I pray thee, and see my Brethren: therefore he cometh not to the King's Table.*] He expresses in many words, the great Importunity of David, for leave to go and visit his Relations: which he thought might make the King not take it ill, that he had granted it.

Ver. 30. *And Saul's Anger was kindled against Jonathan; and he said unto him, Thou Son of a perverse rebellious Woman.*] Or, as it is in the Hebrew, *thou Son of perverse Rebellion*. That is, a very perverse Rebel.

*Do not I know that thou hast chosen the Son of Jesse, to thy own confusion?*] Made him his Friend, to his utter undoing.

*And unto the confusion of thy Mother's Nakedness.*] For the World would think that he was none



none of his Son : because he loved him entirely, whom Saul hated extremely.

Ver. 31. *For as long as the Son of Jesse liveth upon the ground, thou shalt not be established, nor thy Kingdom.]* He was fully satisfied that David, if he lived, would be King of Israel. Which if he knew by Samuel's anointing him, it was Madness to imagine that he should be able to overthrow the Counsel of God.

*Wherefore now fetch him to me, for he shall surely die.]* He could not expect to be obeyed, since his Son loved him so much : But his Fury made him lay this Command upon him.

Ver. 32. *And Jonathan answered Saul his Father, Wherefore should he be slain? what hath he done?]* He declines his Command, by desiring to know what his Guilt was.

Ver. 33. *And Saul cast a Javelin at him to smite him.]* It is not said, as it is of David (xix. 10.) *to smite him to the Wall* : And therefore some think he intended only to wound him, not to kill him : But the word *smite*, in Scripture, commonly signifies to kill, and there is no reason to take it otherwise here : Saul's Fury being so great, that he minded not what he did. One would think that he used a *Javelin* or *Lance*, as a *Scepter* : For it was always ready at hand.

*Wherefore Jonathan knew that it was determined of his Father to slay David.]* That it was his unalterable Resolution. Which is implied in that Phrase, *ver. 31. he is the Son of Death*, as *Constantius L'Empereur* observes upon *Bava Kama*, p. 90.

Ver. 34. *So Jonathan rose from the Table in fierce Anger, and did eat no Meat the second day of the Month, for he was grieved for David, because his Father had done him shame.]* Here are two Reasons why he fasted : *first*, because he was extremely afflicted for David ; and *secondly*, his Father had put Jonathan to shame, by his foul Language, and by throwing a *Javelin* at him : For so the Words run clearly in the *Hebrew* ; *for he was grieved for David, and because, &c.* the copulative *and* being wanting, as in many other places.

Ver. 35. *And it came to pass in the morning.]* Of the third day.

*That Jonathan went out into the Field, at the time appointed with David, and a little Lad with him.]* According to their Agreement, *ver. 20, 21.*

Ver. 36. *And he said to the Lad, Run, find out the Arrow which I shoot ; and as the Lad ran, he shot the Arrow beyond him.]* Which was the Sign given to David of Saul's ill Intentions, *ver. 22.*

Ver. 37. *And when the Lad was come to the place of the Arrow, which Jonathan had shot, Jonathan cried after the Lad, Is not the Arrow beyond thee?]* He cried so loud, I suppose, that David might hear him what he said.

Ver. 38. *And Jonathan cried after the Lad, make speed, stay not.]* So desirous he was to be alone with David.

*And Jonathan's Lad gathered up the Arrows and came to his Master.*

Ver. 39. *And the Lad knew not any thing, only Jonathan and David knew the Matter.]* The meaning of all this.

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Ver. 40. *And Jonathan gave his Artillery to the Lad, and said unto him, Go carry them into the City.]* That he might be left alone with David.

Ver. 41. *And as soon as the Lad was gone, David arose out of his place towards the South.]* On the South of the Stone *Ezel* : On the North side of which Jonathan shot his Arrows, that the Lad might not chance to stumble upon David.

*And fell on his face to the ground, and bowed himself three times.]* After three Bows, he fell on his face ; out of Reverence to him, as the King's Son, and his excellent Friend. *Arrianus* saith, *lib. 4.* that this Prostration was introduced by *Cyrus* : But he is confuted by this Action of David ; which shows it to have been a far more ancient Posture.

*And they kissed one another, and wept one with another : until David exceeded.]* Being to become an Exile from his Friend, from his Wife, from his Kindred, and the People of God ; and from all sacred Solemnities.

Ver. 42. *And Jonathan said to David, Go in peace, forasmuch as we have sworn both of us, in the Name of the LORD, saying the LORD be between me and thee, and between my Seed and thy Seed for ever.]* As much as to say, doubt not that I will faithfully keep my Covenant with thee ; as I doubt not of thy perpetual Stedfastness in it, when I am dead. And this must be our Satisfaction, in this sad Separation.

*And he arose and departed.]* That is, David left Jonathan.

*And Jonathan went into the City.]* I suppose their Discourse continued but a short time ; for fear of being discovered.

## C H A P. XXI.

Ver. 1. **T**hen David came to Nob.] It is hard to tell where this City was ; for it is not reckoned among the Cities of the Priests, either in the Tribe of *Judah*, or of *Benjamin*, or of any other. But *D. Kimchi* saith, his Father took it for *Jerusalem* ; and perhaps it was near to it : Where the Tabernacle being fixed, the Priests resorted thither in great Numbers, and settled there. In *Neb. xi. 32.* we find mention of a City of this Name, in the Tribe of *Benjamin* : Whither *Saul* perhaps brought the Tabernacle, being his own Tribe.

*Unto Abimelech the Priest.]* Intending here to commend himself and his Cause to God ; and to beg his Direction and Protection. *Abimelech* is no where called the High-Priest, but always *Abimelech the Priest*, or simply *the Priest*, *ver. 4, 5, 6, 9.* yet being the Son of *Abitub* (xxii. 9, 11.) who was the Son of *Phineas*, the Son of *Eli*, he is generally supposed to have been the Brother of *Abijah* (mentioned *xiv. 3.*) and he being dead, to have succeeded him in the High-Priesthood.

*And Abimelech was afraid at the meeting of David.]* Seeing him alone ; and having heard, perhaps, something of the King's Displeasure against him.

*And said unto him, Why art thou alone, and no Man with thee?]* A Man of David's Quality, he knew, never went without Attendants.

I. 1

And



And the truth is, *David* had some Persons with him, as the 4th Verse tells us, and appears from our Saviour's Words (in the second of *St. Mark*) where he mentions *David* and those that were with him. But he had no such Persons as used to be his Guard; and he left those that were with him at some distance, that *Abimelech* might not see them.

Ver. 2. *And David said unto Abimelech the Priest, The King hath commanded me a Business, and hath said unto me, let no Man know any thing of the Business whereon I send thee, and what I have commanded thee.*] We are not from hence to take an Example of speaking Untruths (as *Conradus Pellicanus* here glosses) but the Wickedness of the World is the more to be deplored, which sometimes puts a necessity upon excellent Men to lye, that they may preserve their Lives, which cannot be safe without it.

*And I have appointed my Servants to such and such a place.*] Here he acknowledges he had Servants with him: But he had disposed them into several Places, that the King's Business might be the better concealed.

Ver. 3. *Now therefore what is under thy hand?*] He desires to know what he was able to do for him, to supply his Wants.

*Give me five Loaves of Bread in my hand.*] Particularly he desires to satisfy his Hunger, and enough for his Servants.

*Or, what is there present.*] That is, any other Victuals.

Ver. 4. *And the Priest answered, There is no common Bread under my hand, but there is hallowed Bread: if the young Men have kept themselves at least from Women.*] It was the ancient Custom among other Nations, for the Priests to keep themselves even from the lawful use of Women, before they performed their Office: As *Porphry* informs us, lib. 4. Περὶ Ἀποχρῆς, sect. 7. Therefore *Abimelech* requires this of *David's* Soldiers, or Companions, that being to eat of the holy Bread, which none but Priests might eat, they should eat it with the same Purity, which was required of the Priests.

Ver. 5. *And David answered the Priest, and said unto him, of a truth Women have been kept from us about these three days, since I came out.*] As many Days as the LORD himself required for the sanctifying of the People, when he appeared on Mount Sinai, at the giving of the Law, *Exod. xix. 15.*

*And the Vessels of the young Men.*] That is, their Bodies: So the Word *Keli* here signifies, as οὐτὸν doth in 1 *Tim. iv. 4.*

*Are holy.*] That is, separated from Women.

*And the Bread is in a manner common.*] He adds, that he need not scruple to give them the hallowed Bread; for it was not so holy as when it was upon the Table of the LORD: But became, in a manner, or in some part, common Bread; being now the Food not only of the Priest, but of his whole Family.

*Yea, tho' it were sanctified this day in the Vessel.*] The marginal Translation is more plain, especially when there was other that day sanctified in the Vessel. He means new Bread was set upon the Table of the LORD: So that no wrong was done to him. By the *Vessel* is meant, the Dish on which the Bread was placed, mentioned *Exod. xxv. 29.*

Ver. 6. *So the Priest gave him hallowed Bread; for there was no Bread there but the Shew-bread, that was taken from before the LORD, to put hot Bread in the day that it was taken away.*] In this neither *Abimelech* nor *David* committed any Sin: For invincible Necessity dispensed with all these ritual Laws; as the *Jews* themselves confess. Particularly *R. Levi*, who saith in a great Famine, they might eat an *Ass's* Head, which was an unclean Creature. And they justify this by the Words of the Law, *Levit. xviii. 5. he shall live in them; not, He shall die in them.* From whence they gather, that in danger of Life such Laws were not to be observed. And so *Procopius Gazæus* observes, that wise Men among the ancient People of God, had less regard to these bodily Precepts of the Law: And that *Abiathar* in granting leave to *David* and his Men to eat of the Pontifical Bread, *plusquam vulgus sapiebat*, was much wiser than the vulgar People. He calls him *Abiathar*, not *Abimelech*, who granted this Indulgence; for so doth our blessed Saviour, *Mark ii. 26.* and there is a learned Friend of mine, who hath a *Dissertation* ready for the Press, to prove that *Abiathar* was at this time High-Priest. Tho' it is commonly thought he was only the Sagan, as the *Jews* in later times call him who was the High-Priest's Vicar: And upon that account was a secondary High-Priest; tho' that Name of High-Priest did not belong to *Abiathar* in the highest Sense. And besides this, there is no incongruity in saying, That was done in the days of *Abiathar* the High-Priest (as our Saviour speaks) which was done in *Abiathar's* days, tho' done somewhat before he came to the High-Priesthood. As things may be said to have been done in the days of *Henry VIII.* or any other King of *England*, which came to pass before he began to reign.

Ver. 7. *Now a certain Man of the Servants of Saul was there that day, detained before the LORD.*] It is not to be imagined, that he was detained here by Force and Constraint: But by some Vow he had upon him; or other Religious Performance, to which he had obliged himself.

*And his Name was Doeg, an Edomite.*] His native Country was *Edom*: But he was profelyted to the Jewish Religion.

*The chiefest of the Herdsmen that belonged unto Saul.*] The Hebrew Word *Abir* signifies a potent Man or Prince, and is sometimes attributed to God. And therefore here signifies, That he was set over all the Herdsmen, as their Inspector and Governor. Such there were in *Syria*, as *Bochartus* observes, out of *Diodorus Siculus*; who mentions one that was προεστὴς τῶν βασιλικῶν χηνῶν, *pecoris regii præfectus*. And so the *Targum* and *Kimchi*, and others, here translate it.

Ver. 8. *And David said unto Abimelech, Is there not here under thy hand either Spear or Sword? for I have not brought my Sword, nor any Weapon with me.*] He left them all behind, that he might the better conceal himself, and pass for a private Man.

*Because the King's Business required haste.*] But he pretended to *Abimelech*, it was because he had



had not time to go to his House: The King pressing him immediately to be gone about his Business.

Ver. 9. *And the Priest said, The Sword of Goliath the Philistine, whom thou slewest in the Valley of Elah, behold it is here wrapt up in a Cloth behind the Ephod.]* Behind the place where the Garments of the Priests were laid up: Of which the Ephod and its Appurtenances were the chief.

*If thou wilt take that, take it; for there is no other save that here. And David said, There is none like unto that, give it me.]* Which he thought he might use, tho' it had been laid up in God's Treasury, as a Monument of his wonderful Mercy: Because he was in great Necessity to provide for his own Defence.

Ver. 10. *And David arose and fled that day, for fear of Saul.]* Out of the Country of Israel.

*And went to Achish the King of Gath.]* A miserable Condition! to be forced to flee to those for Protection, who, he had reason to think, were his bitter Enemies. For this was the City of Goliath whom he had slain; and whose Sword he had now about him. But perhaps he thought he should not be known; or he knew Achish to be a very generous Person; or being now in Disgrace with Saul, he thought the Philistines might take him for Saul's Enemy, and engage with them against him. Thus Themistocles being banished his own Country, fled first to Admetus the King of the Molossians, with whom he had been at enmity, and then to the King of Persia.

Ver. 11. *And the Servants of Achish said unto him, Is not this David the King of the Land?] Either they meant a chief Commander in Israel, who was respected as the King: Or they had heard of his being designed to be King instead of Saul, which made him persecute him.*

*Did they not sing of him one to another, in Dances, saying, Saul hath slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands?] By this it appears, they had good Information of what was done in the Land of Israel: And so might know what was reported, that Samuel had anointed him to be their King.*

Ver. 12. *And David laid up these Words in his Heart, and was sore afraid of Achish King of Gath.]* This discourse deeply affected him; and made him think himself not safe there.

Ver. 13. *And he changed his Behaviour before them, and feigned himself mad in their hands, and scrabbled on the Doors of the Gates, and let the Spittle fall down upon his Beard.]* He counterfeited himself to be out of his Wits; or to be a Fool, who never had any. For he wrote upon the Gates, and flavered, as Fools are wont to do.

Ver. 14. *And Achish said unto his Servant, Lo, the Man is mad, wherefore have ye brought him unto me?] Some of the Courtiers had presented him unto the King: Who seeing him a goodly Person, had lifted him, perhaps, as an Officer in his Service.*

Ver. 15. *Have I need of mad Men, that ye have brought this Fellow to play the Madman in my presence? Shall this Fellow come into my House?] Vol. II.*

He would not have his Court troubled with Fools or Madmen. For it is likely he did not believe this to be David; or if he was, he was now become good for nothing: And come out of his own Country, because he was beside himself.

C H A P. XXII.

Ver. 1. **D**AVID therefore departed thence, and escaped to the Cave of Adullam.] Which was a Strong-hold (1 Chron. xi. 13.) in the Tribe of Judah (Josh. xv. 35.) unto which Tribe he belonging, might hope to find some Friends there.

*And when his Brethren and all his Father's House heard it, they went down thither to him.]* Either to comfort him; or to secure themselves from the Fury of Saul: Who they thought might probably wreck his Hatred to David upon them.

Ver. 2. *And every one that was in Distress.]* All needy People, pinched with want, who heard that David was there.

*And every one that was in debt.]* Perhaps David might not know they were such Persons: Or if he did, intended not to protect them from their Creditors, if they had been able to pay them. It was the manner in ancient times, among the Gauls, for those who were in Debt, or oppressed, to betake themselves to the Service of some great Men: By whom, as they were maintained, so they devoted themselves to live and die with them. Thus Cæsar tells us, Lib. 6. de Bello Gall. Cap. 13. *Plerique cum aut ære alieno aut magnitudine tributorum, aut injuria potentiorum premantur: sese in servitutem dicant nobilibus, &c.* And these they called Soldurii: And the Men that came to David seem to have been such, as resolved to live and die with him.

*And every one that was discontented.]* In the Hebrew, bitter of Soul; that is, lay under sore Afflictions.

*Gathered themselves unto him, and he became a Captain over them.]* They lifted themselves under him, as their Commander: Who was forced to take this course in his own Defence, that he might not be suddenly surprized. But Grotius observes, Lib. 1. de Jure Belli & Pacis, Cap. 4. Sect. 6. that David did not entertain these Men into his Service, till in the Judgment of Jonathan, and by many other certain Arguments, his Life appeared to be in imminent danger. And then he neither assaulted any City, nor sought for an occasion to fight: but avoided it, by seeking for lurking Places, sometimes in the Desarts, sometimes among strange People; always taking care not to hurt his Countrymen.

*And there were with him about four hundred Men.]* Among whom, I suppose, his own Kindred were the chief.

Ver. 3. *And David went thence to Mizpeh of Moab.]* For the Moabites were at difference with Saul, xiv. 47.

*And he said unto the King of Moab, Let my Father and my Mother, I pray thee, come forth, and be with you.]* He the rather hoped for this Kindness to be shown to his aged Parents



(who were not able to travel up and down, as he was likely to do) because he was descended from a *Moabite*, by the Mother's side: Especially if *Ruth the Moabite's* were of the Royal Family, as the *Jews* imagine.

*Till I know what God will do with me.*] Who, he doubted not, would make good his Word to him.

Ver. 4. *And he brought them before the King of Moab, and they dwelt with him, all the time that David was in the Hold.*] All the time of his Exile; when he wandered here and there, and had no certain place of Abode: Being haunted by *Saul* from place to place; seldom suffering him to rest. So *Pelicanus* expounds the *Hebrew* word *Metzudab*: Which signifies also a *Strong-hold*.

Ver. 5. *And the Prophet Gad.*] Who being bred under *Samuel*, and knowing he had anointed *David* to be King, resolved to accompany him in his Banishment: Which was a great comfort to him.

*Said unto David, abide not in the Hold.*] This doth not signify any particular strong Place, where he now was: But in general, all those places where he thought himself secure, in the neighbouring Countries.

*Depart, and get thee into the Land of Judah.*] Where he would have him publicly appear; as one that confided in God, and in his own Innocence.

*Then David departed, and came into the Forest of Hereth.*] Where there were many secret lurking places: Unto which he might upon occasion resort.

Ver. 6. *And when Saul heard that David was discovered, and the Men that were with him.*] He was not so well beloved, as to have early Intelligence of *David's* lifting Men: Which made him reproach those that attended him in the following Verse.

*Now Saul abode in Gibeah, under a Tree in Ramah.*] Or, in an high place, as *Ramah* signifies. Otherwise the first Words must be interpreted near *Gibeah*; or in the Territories of *Gibeah*.

*Having his Spear in his hand.*] By his *Spear* is to be understood his *Scepter*, according to the Phrase of those times. For so *Justin* (Lib. xliii. Cap. 3.) speaking of the first times of the *Romans* (which was about the Reign of *Saul*) saith, *Per ea adhuc tempora, Regis hastas pro digemate habebant, quas Græci sceptrâ dixere, &c.* 'In those days, Kings hitherto had *Spears* as 'Signs of Royal Authority: Which the *Greeks* 'call *Scepters*. For in the beginning of things, 'the Ancients worshipped *Spears* for immortal 'Gods. In memory of which Religion, *Spears* 'are still added to the Images of the Gods.' And thus the Kings of *Argos* (as *Pausanias* testifies, in his *Bæotica*) called their *Scepters*, *Spears*.

*And all his Servants were standing about him.*] His usual Guards, and the principal Officers of his Court.

Ver. 7. *Then Saul said unto his Servants that stood about him, Hear now ye Benjamites.*] Ye Men of my own Tribe: of whom he seems to speak with disdain.

*Will the Son of Jesse give every one of you Fields and Vineyards, and make you all Captains of thousands and Captains of hundreds?*] Bestow Preferment upon them all, more or less; if not Lands

of Inheritance. For so the Words are to be translated, *give you Fields, &c. or make you Captains, &c.*

Ver. 8. *That all of you have conspired against me.*] To conceal *David's* Designs from him, if not to assist him in them. The Spirit of Jealousy always possesses those who are engaged in such bloody Designs, as he had against *David*: Which all good Men abhorred.

*And there is none of you that shows me, my Son hath made a League with the Son of Jesse; and there is none of you that is sorry for me.*] He suspected *Jonathan* had made a League with *David*; but did not certainly know it, much less what it was: And was very much vexed, that none were solicitous enough for him (so the word signifies, as *De Dieu* observes, which we translate *sorry for him*) to make a Discovery of it to him.

*Or shew me, that my Son hath stirred up my Servant against me, to lie in wait as at this day.*] His Jealousy carried him so far, as to make him suspect, *Jonathan* not only sided with *David*; but had encouraged him to take up Arms, and to appear openly, as having many Friends and Partakers: For since he threw the Javelin at *Jonathan*, it is likely he absented himself from Court; or did not appear so frequently; or looked discontented, when he came into his Presence.

Ver. 9. *Then answered Doeg the Edomite, which was over the Servants of Saul.*] The rest being silent, he undertook to inform the King, who were false unto him: Or being a forward Man, and hated *David*, prevented all the rest of his Fellow-Servants.

*And said, I saw the Son of Jesse.*] He speaks as contemptibly of him, as his Master had lately been wont to do; not vouchsafing to call him by his Name, xx. 27, 30.

*Coming to Nob, to Abimelech, the Son of Abitub.*] He represents him as if he came to take Advice of *Abimelech*, and lay his Designs accordingly.

Ver. 10. *And he enquired of the LORD for him.*] Some think *Doeg* in this slandered *Abimelech*, because we read nothing of it; and *David* speaks of his false Tongue: But this may as well be true, as that which follows it. And *Doeg's* Wickedness consisted in representing things wrong: Concealing the Truth, and saying nothing of *David's* Pretences to *Abimelech*; but insinuating as if he were in a Plot with *David* against the King. Whereas, the good Man was made to believe, that *David* was going about the King's Business, and upon that account assisted him.

*And gave him Victuals, and gave him the Sword of Goliath the Philistine.*] And very innocently, as he very well knew: But represented these as Acts, whereby he abetted *David* in his Conspiracy: Which are the Lyes of which *David* accuses him; nothing being farther from the Truth.

Ver. 11. *And the King sent to call Abimelech the Son of Abitub, and all his Father's House, the Priests that were in Nob: and they came all of them to the King.*] By his Father's House is meant all the House of *Eli*: Whom God had threatened to cut off.

Ver.



Ver. 12. *And Saul said, Hear now thou Son of Abitub.]* He shows not the least respect to him, but rather the utmost Contempt: Calling him in his Rage, *the Son of Abitub.*

*And he answered, Here am I, my Lord.]* But he did not forget his respect unto the King.

Ver. 13. *And Saul said unto him, Why have ye conspired against me, thou and the Son of Jesse? in that thou hast given him Bread, and a Sword, and hast enquired of God for him, that he should rise against me, to lie in wait, as at this day.]* A very rash Charge, unless there had been Proof, that he did these things with an evil intent, which there was not.

Ver. 14. *Then Abimelech answered and said, And who is so faithful among all thy Servants as David, which is the King's Son-in-law, and goeth at thy bidding, and is honourable in thy House?] The Oracle was consulted only upon publick Occasions, not for any private Business. And therefore the Sense of Abimelech's Apology for himself is this: Since David was held by all to be a most Loyal Subject, as well as a Person of great Honour, and in high Favour with the King, having married his Daughter; what could he think but that David was sent by the King (as he said he was) upon some Business of publick concern; to command his Forces, suppose (as he had often done) in some Expedition against his Enemies? And doubting what course to take, came to advise with God, as he had done heretofore. For this was not the first time (as he saith in the next Verse) that he had consulted the Divine Majesty for him, in difficult Cases, concerning the good of the Kingdom.*

Ver. 15. *Did I then begin to enquire of God for him?] He desired that might not be an Argument against him; for he had theretofore done the same thing without any imputation of Guilt.*

*Be it far from me.] That which he was charged withal; Conspiracy against the King, ver. 13.*

*Let not the King impute any thing to his Servant, or to his Father's House; for thy Servant knew nothing of all this, more or less.]* If there was any bad design, he pleads perfect Ignorance of it.

Ver. 16. *And the King said unto him, Thou shalt surely die, Abimelech, thou and thy Father's House.] A mad Resolution! For what had the rest of the Priests done, to deserve such a bloody Execution?*

Ver. 17. *And the King said unto the Footmen that stood about him.] In the Hebrew it is, to the Runners: That is, to those who used to go before him, and to follow him when he went abroad.*

*Turn and slay the Priests of the LORD, because their hand is also with David; and because they knew when he fled, and did not shew it me.]* Such was the Power their Kings exercised (as Samuel told them they would) that without a formal Process against a Man accused of a Crime, they commanded him to be cut off at their pleasure.

*But the Servants of the King would not put forth their hand to fall upon the Priests of the LORD.]* Such was their Reverence to God and Religion in ancient Times: Which kept them in their Wars from doing any hurt to the Priests of

their Enemies, as Grotius observes, *Lib. 3. de Jure Belli & Pacis, Cap. 11. Sect. 10.* And therefore Theodoret here justly praises the Guards of Saul, that they chose rather to expose themselves to the enraged Fury of Saul, than execute it upon the Priests of God.

Ver. 18. *And the King said to Doeg, Turn thou and fall upon the Priests.]* He who was the Informer, he made also his Executioner.

*And Doeg the Edomite turned and fell upon the Priests, and slew that day eighty five Persons.]* Kings never want some to execute their Commands, tho' never so bloody. Saul was little better than a Mad-man; and yet had those at his beck who would do as he bid them, because he was their King. It was excellently therefore said by Justin Martyr, Εἰχόμεθα τῆς βασιλείας καὶ ἀρχουλίας, μετὰ τῆς βασιλικῆς δυνάμεως, καὶ σώζονται τὸν λογισμὸν ἐχούσας εὐρεσθῆναι: *Let us pray that Kings and Rulers, together with a Royal Power, may be found having a sober Mind.*

*That did wear a Linen Ephod.] i. e. ministered unto God: But we are not to understand by the Ephod such a Garment as the High-Priest wore, for this is distinguished from that by the matter of it, which was merely Linen: And nothing else but a Linen Robe, which was an honourable kind of Garment, which others who were not Priests were permitted to wear; as I observed before upon Chap. ii. ver. 18. and see Braunius, Lib. 2. de Vestitu Hebr. sacr. Cap. 6.*

Ver. 19. *And Nob, the City of the Priests, smote he with the edge of the Sword, both Man, and Woman, and Suckling, and Oxen, and Asses, and Sheep; with the edge of the Sword.]* His Fury transported him to deal worse with them than he did with the Amalekites: Some of whom he spared, tho' God commanded him to destroy them all. But he did this to terrify all the Israelites from giving the least Assistance to David; and make them forward to come and tell him, if they knew where he was. In all this was fulfilled the Word of the LORD against the House of Eli by the Prophet, in the second Chapter of this Book: And by Samuel when he was a Child, in the third Chapter. Abarbinel thinks that at this time the Gibeonites were slain; upon which account there was a fore Famine in the Days of David. For Josephus saith, *Lib. 6. Cap. 14.* that Doeg slew in all three hundred and eighty five Persons: Taking some Men as wicked as himself unto his Assistance.

Ver. 20. *And one of the Sons of Abimelech, the Son of Abitub, named Abiathar, escaped, and fled after David.]* For he could be safe nowhere else.

Ver. 21. *And Abiathar shewed David that Saul had slain the LORD's Priests.]* Which confirmed David in his Belief, of the Hatred he bore him, and his Resolution to destroy him.

Ver. 22. *And David said unto Abiathar, I knew it that day, when Doeg the Edomite was there, that he would surely tell Saul.]* For he knew he was none of his Friend; and a Man that loved Mischief.

Ver. 23. *Abide thou with me; fear not: for be that seeketh my Life, seeketh thy Life.]* He comforts him with the Assurance, that he would take as much care of him, as of himself.



*But with me thou shalt be in safeguard.]* For he was sure God would make good his Promise of protecting him, 'till he was made King of Israel.

## C H A P. XXIII.

Ver. 1. **T**HEN they told David, saying, *The Philistines fight against Keilah.]* Or, *they had told David, &c.* For this was done before Abiathar came to him to tell him of the Slaughter of the Priests, ver. 6. where it is said he fled to David to Keilah. Which was a City in the Tribe of Judah, Josh. xv. 44. Which the Philistines now besieged: being encouraged thereunto, perhaps, by the News they heard that David was forced to flee his Country.

*And they rob the threshing Floor.]* Which was commonly without their Cities; for the Convenience of Wind, to separate the Chaff from the Corn. See Ruth iii. 2, 15.

Ver. 2. *And David enquired of the LORD.]* It is probable by the Prophet Gad, who we read before (xxii. 5.) was now with him. For there is no mention yet of Abiathar's having the Ephod: Tho' some think it is mentioned, ver. 6. to show how David enquired of God.

*Shall I go and smite these Philistines? and the LORD said unto David, Go and smite the Philistines and save Keilah.]* A remarkable Instance of David's Love to his Country: Unto which he did not become an Enemy, when he was banished from it.

Ver. 3. *And David's Men said unto him, Behold, we be afraid here in Judah.]* In that part of the Country where they then were.

*How much more then if we come to Keilah, against the Armies of the Philistines?] His Men argued against this Expedition, because they did not think themselves safe in their own Country, where they hoped they had some Friends: And therefore thought they should be in greater Danger, if they made the Philistines their Enemies.*

Ver. 4. *Then David enquired of the LORD yet again.]* Not for his own Satisfaction, but for theirs: As we read in the History of Gideon, that he did.

*And the LORD answered him and said, Arise.]* Make no delay.

*Go down to Keilah, for I will deliver the Philistines into thy hand.]* Here he expressly assures him of Victory.

Ver. 5. *So David and his Men went to Keilah, and fought with the Philistines, and brought away their Cattle, and smote them with a great Slaughter. So David saved the Inhabitants of Keilah.]* He seems to have pursued the Philistines to their own Country: From whence he brought their Cattle. Or else we must suppose these Cattle were the Booty they had among the Israelites: Which is not so probable, because then David would have restored them to their Owners.

Ver. 6. *And it came to pass that when Abiathar, the Son of Abimelech, fled to David to Keilah, that he came down with an Ephod in his hand.]* Or rather, with the Ephod. For he being left, I suppose, to keep the Sanctuary, while his Father and the rest of the Priests went to

wait upon Saul, as soon as he heard of their Slaughter, took this principal Vestment of the High-Priest, viz. the Ephod, unto which the Urim and Thummim with the Breast-plate were annexed, and carried it unto David. Unto whom he hoped to be the more acceptable, when he appeared capable to serve him in that high Office. And accordingly he calls upon him, ver. 9. to bring hither the Ephod: As he did afterward, xxx. 7. But the Ephod could do no good, without the Urim and Thummim, which were inseparable from it. And that he speaks of the High-Priest's Ephod is manifest, because he doth not call it Linen Ephod, such as the Priests wore; but the Ephod. The only Difficulty is, that Saul after this seems to have consulted God by Urim, xxviii. 6. But perhaps he made a new one, in the room of that which Abiathar carried away: But God would not own it, nor any other way give him Advice. Aben Ezra indeed here notes, that there wants that which they call the He Haje-diab, that is, the demonstrative Particle He, to show that he means the High-Priest's Ephod, and therefore it was only a Linen Ephod. Which led him into this absurd Opinion, that in some cases God answered without Urim and Thummim; being consulted merely by an Ephod.

Ver. 7. *And it was told Saul that David was come to Keilah.]* So remarkable an Action could not but come presently to Saul's ears; who was not at all mollified by it, but rather more resolutely bent upon David's Destruction.

*And Saul said, God hath delivered him into my hand, for he is shut in, by entering into a Town that hath Gates and Bars.]* The Men of Keilah could not but open their Gates to their Deliverer; but Saul fancied that he sought for safety in a place, that would only secure him from running away from him.

Ver. 8. *And Saul called all the People together to war.]* Raised a great Army.

*To go down to Keilah to besiege David and his Men.]* He pretended, it is likely, he would go, and be avenged of the Philistines: But his inward Intention was to go against David.

Ver. 9. *And David knew that Saul secretly practised mischief against him.]* This intimates that Saul did not openly declare, when he raised his Army, he would besiege Keilah; but made a shew of some other design.

*And he said to Abiathar the Priest, Bring hither the Ephod.]* Which no doubt he put on: Otherwise he could not have enquired of the LORD by it.

Ver. 10. *Then said David, O LORD God of Israel, thy Servant hath certainly heard that Saul seeks to come to Keilah, to destroy the City for my sake.]* Some think that David put on the Ephod, and then asked the LORD's Advice: But that is a great Mistake; for the High-Priest was the Person appointed by God, to ask Counsel of him for the supreme Governour, Numb. xxvii. 21. Therefore David spake these Words by the Mouth of Abiathar.

Ver. 11. *Will the Men of Keilah deliver me into his hands? will Saul come down, as thy Servant hath heard: O LORD God of Israel, I beseech thee, tell thy Servant. And the LORD said,*



*He will come down.]* He seems to have been in a great Fright, and some confusion of Spirit, when he spake these Words: Which made him not only ask two things together (which the Jews say was not usual) but also out of due Order. For the first Question should have been, *Will Saul come down?* and then the other should have followed, *Will they deliver me into his hand?* God therefore put him into the right Method, by answering to the last Question first: As the Jewish Doctors observe in the Gemara of the Codex Joma.

Ver. 12. *Then said David, Will the Men of Keilah deliver me and my Men into the hand of Saul?* Hence the Talmudists gather, that he who asked out of order, was bound to ask again.

*And the LORD said, They will deliver thee.]* He saw the base Disposition of their Hearts, whatsoever Gratitude they pretended to David for their Deliverance. For that's a rare Virtue; not to be found in those, in whom Self-love prevails. It is not easy to be resolved, how they enquired of God, the Tabernacle not being there. It is likely David had some Tent, wheresoever he was, wherein he was wont to pray to God, and meditate his Praises, and there God was pleased to answer him.

Ver. 13. *Then David and his Men, which were about six hundred.]* His Forces were increased two hundred, since the famous Victory over the Philistines, at Keilah.

*Arose, and departed out of Keilah, and went whithersoever they could go.]* Sometimes to one place, sometimes to another: according as they found any hope of Safety. So Hacksplan interprets this Phrase in his Disputationes, p. 403.

*And it was told Saul, that David was escaped from Keilah.]* Now he began to have better Intelligence of David's Motions; since the Slaughter at Nob: Which made the People afraid to fall under his Displeasure.

*And he forbore to go forth.]* Not knowing as yet where to find him.

Ver. 14. *And David abode in the Wilderness, in strong Holds: and remained in a Mountain, in the Wilderness of Ziph.]* Where it was not easy to come at him.

*And Saul sought him every day, but God delivered him not into his hand.]* As he foolishly fancied he would (ver. 7.) tho' God very manifestly had forsaken him, and was with David.

Ver. 15. *And David saw that Saul was come out to seek his Life.]* That he was restless in his Endeavours to destroy him.

*And David was in the Wilderness of Ziph, in a Wood.]* Where he could better defend himself, than in an open Country.

Ver. 16. *And Jonathan, Saul's Son, arose and went to David into the Wood.]* Being a very private Place, they had, it is likely, by some Intelligence which passed between them, appointed a meeting there.

*And strengthened his hand in God.]* In his Promise to him. What Hecuba saith in Euripides, is most true in this Friend of David's, and in Saul his Father.

Ὁ μὲν πονηρὸς ἔδεν ἄλλο πλὴν κακὸς

Ὁ δ' ἐσθλός, ἐσθλός· καὶ συμφορὰς ὑπὸ

Φύσιν διέφθειρε· ἀλλὰ χρενός ἐς αἰεί.

*A bad Man is nothing else but bad. But a good Man is still good: Nor because of any Calamity doth he lose his Nature; but is always good.*

Ver. 17. *And he said, Fear not, for the hand of Saul my Father shall not find thee: and thou shalt be King over Israel, and I will be next unto thee.]* He doth not mean, that he would succeed him in his Throne: But be the principal Person in the Kingdom, next to David. Which, I suppose, had been agreed between them.

*And that also Saul my Father knoweth.]* For he remembred what Samuel told him, xv. 28. and by his wonderful Successes concluded he was the Person of whom Samuel spake.

Ver. 18. *And they two made a Covenant before the LORD.]* Solemnly renewed the Covenant, which they had formerly made. This is the third time that we read of their making a Covenant. See xviii. 3. xx. 16. In none of which there is any mention of a Sacrifice, no more than there is in the Covenant between David and the Elders of the People, 2 Sam. v. 3. and between Solomon and Hiram, 1 Kings v. 12. which is an Argument that eating together of a Sacrifice, or going between the parts of a Sacrifice, was not essential to the making a Covenant: Tho' it must be acknowledged, the Rite was so ancient of dividing the Parts of the Sacrifice, that hence is the Phrase which is so frequent in Scripture of cutting a Covenant, i. e. entering into it.

*And David abode in the Wood, and Jonathan went to his House.]* For he did not accompany his Father in his search after David.

Ver. 19. *Then came up the Ziphites to Saul to Gibeah, and said, Doth not David hide himself with us in the Strong-hold in the Wood, in the Hill of Hachilah, which is in the south of Jeshimon?* These People were of the Tribe of Judah; among whom David thought himself the safer, because he was of the same Tribe. But they were afraid to be served as those at Nob: Which made them come and discover the Place where he was, very particularly and precisely.

Ver. 20. *Now therefore, O King, come down according to all the desire of thy Soul to come down.]* Which they knew was very great.

*And our part shall be to deliver him into the King's hand.]* For being Neighbours to it, they knew all the Avenues of the Wood where he was; and how to come at him.

Ver. 21. *And Saul said, Blessed are ye of the LORD, for ye have compassion on me.]* This signifies, that the Generality of People did not favour him in his Design: Which made him so joyfully receive the Ziphites Intelligence.

Ver. 22. *Go, I pray you, and prepare ye.]* Dispose all things so, that I may take him.

*And know and see his place, where his haunt is.]* Inform themselves perfectly, in what Hill; or Wood, or Cave he hid himself.

And



*And who hath seen him.]* He would have them certainly informed, that he might not go after him in vain.

*For I am told he dealeth very subtilly.]* So that it was not easy to catch him.

Ver. 23. *See therefore and take knowledge of all the lurking Places, where he hideth himself, and come to me again with the certainty, and I will go with you.]* He seems very diffident, having been so oft disappointed: And by this means gave David time to get Intelligence, and remove to another place.

*And it shall come to pass, that if he be in the Land, I will search him out through all the thousands of Judah.]* Their Tribes were divided into Thousands (see Judges vi. 15.) among some of whom he supposed he would lurk: And he would not cease searching for him till he found him.

Ver. 24. *And they arose and went to Ziph before Saul.]* As he had directed them, ver. 22.

*But David and his Men were in the Wilderness of Maon, in the Plain on the South of Jeshimon.]* Having heard what the Ziphites had undertaken, he disappointed their Design, by going into another Place, with which, it is likely, they were not so well acquainted. For Maon was a distinct Wilderness from Ziph: Tho' both in the Tribe of Judah.

Ver. 25. *Saul also and his Men went to seek him.]* Hearing, I suppose, by the Ziphites, whether he was gone.

*And they told David.]* He also had Intelligence brought him, that Saul was coming against him.

*Therefore he came down into a Rock.]* Some craggy Place.

*And abode in the Wilderness of Maon.]* Not thinking himself safe there, he went into another part of the same Wilderness.

*And when Saul heard that, he pursued after David in the Wilderness of Maon.]* So that he came to the very Place where he was.

Ver. 26. *And Saul went on this side of the Mountain, and David and his Men on that side of the Mountain: and David made haste to get away for fear of Saul; for Saul and his Men compassed David and his Men round about to take them.]* Saul's Forces being far more numerous, he divided them into several Parties; who marching several ways, were about to encompass the whole Mountain: So that it should be impossible for David to escape them. Who therefore made haste to get away before he was quite surrounded.

Ver. 27. *But there came a Messenger unto Saul, saying, Haste thee and come: for the Philistines have invaded the Land.]* A marvellous Providence of God, who stirred them up at this very time to make an Irruption into the Land of Israel, for the Preservation of David when he was in extreme Danger.

Ver. 28. *Wherefore Saul returned from following after David, and went against the Philistines.]* It was very probable David wou'd in a little time have fallen into his hands, had not the Messenger, who, I suppose, was sent by his Council, desired him with all speed to come and oppose the Philistines, who were the most dangerous Enemy.

*Therefore they called the Name of that place Sela-hamah-le-koth.]* That is, the Rock of Divisions. Either because Saul was distracted here between two Counsels, whether to pursue David, or go immediately against the Philistines: Or because God divided Saul from David; when he was coming up close unto him.

Ver. 29. *And David went up from thence, and dwelt in the Strong-holds at En-gedi.]* A place in the Tribe of Judah, not far from the dead Sea; which Solomon in his Song celebrates for the famous Vineyards which were there. And St. Hierom and Eusebius say there was excellent Balm at En-gedi: From which the Wilderness near it took its name, where David found secure lurking Places.

## C H A P. XXIV.

Ver. 1. *AND it came to pass when Saul was returned from following the Philistines.]* Who either retreated upon Saul's March towards them; or he drove them out of the Land.

*That it was told him, saying, Behold, David is in the Wilderness of En-gedi.]* The very place was not told him where David was; but only in general that he was in that Wilderness.

Ver. 2. *Then Saul took three thousand chosen Men out of all Israel.]* Men of Valour; and whom he thought he might trust.

*And went to seek David and his Men upon the Rocks of the wild Goats.]* In craggy and bushy Places, where none but wild Goats lived; but he imagined David might there skulk: And therefore resolved to be at the pains of searching for him there.

Ver. 3. *And he came to the Sheep-coats by the way, where there was a Cave.]* In which the Sheep rested in the Heat of the Day. Unto which Place David was directed by God's Guidance: For Saul would not suspect that he would abide in the high way unto those Rocks; where he was going to look for him.

*And Saul went in to cover his Feet.]* See upon Judges iii. 24.

*And David and his Men remained in the sides of the Cave.]* Where they could see him by the Light at the entrance of it: But he could not see them, because it was dark in the remote parts of it. Some of these Caves were exceeding large: Strabo in his Sixteenth Book mentions one that would contain four thousand Men.

Ver. 4. *And the Men of David said unto him, Behold the day of which the LORD said unto thee; Behold, I will deliver thine Enemy into thy hand, that thou mayst do to him, as shall seem good unto thee.]* We do not read any where that God made a Promise to deliver Saul into David's hand: But so they interpreted what Samuel had said, that God would take the Kingdom from Saul and give it to David. And they having a desire to return to their own Habitations, and likewise to have Preferment under David, desired him to make use of the Opportunity which now presented it self of destroying his Enemy, and advancing himself.

Then



*Then David arose, and cut off the Skirt of Saul's Robe privately.]* Which he might easily do, if he were asleep: As that Phrase may be interpreted, *he went in to cover his Feet.* This Robe was long, coming down to the Feet: As the Hebrew Word *Meli* signifies.

Ver. 5. *And it came to pass, that afterwards David's Heart smote him.]* He was inwardly troubled.

*Because he had cut off Saul's Skirt.]* For it looked like an Indignity unto a Prince, to have his Royal Robe disfigured. *Tantum intelligebat personæ illius sanctitudinem* (as Grotius speaks) such he understood was the Sacredness of his Person. And that very deservedly; for the supreme Powers being obnoxious to many Men's Hatred, ought to be secured in the discharge of their Office. Of which the Romans took care in the very Tribunes of the People, that they should be ἀσυλτοι, inviolable, L. 1. *de Jure B. & P.* Cap. 4. Sect. 7.

Ver. 6. *And he said unto his Men.]* When he returned unto them, and they grew angry, he had only cut off the Skirt of his Robe, and not killed him.

*The LORD forbid that I should do this thing.]* Which they desired.

*Unto my Master.]* For I must own him, as long as he is alive, to be my Lord and Master; unto whom I am bound to be faithful.

*The LORD's Anointed,]* Whom God hath appointed to be King as long as he lives.

*To stretch forth my hand against him, seeing he is the Anointed of the LORD.]* Set up by God; who alone could throw him down. For he was as much constituted King by God while he lived, as David was after his Death. And his anointing made his Person sacred: For the very Heathens look'd upon their Kings, as holding the Place of God. So Artabanus the Persian (as Plutarch relates in the Life of Themistocles) *This is the very best of our many excellent Laws, τὸ τιμᾶν βασιλέα καὶ προσκυνεῖν ὡς εἰκόνα Θεοῦ τὰ παντὶ ἀσώζοντες,* That we should honour and adore our King, as the Image of God, who preserves all things.

Ver. 7. *So David stayed his Servants with these words, and suffered them not to rise against Saul.]* Who still had a desire to kill him, tho' David would not: Which he hindered by his wise and pious Persuasions.

*But Saul rose up out of the Cave, and went his way.]* To his Camp: Which he had left, to take some Repose in the Cave; having a Guard to attend him, who stood without, while he covered his Feet within.

Ver. 8. *David also arose afterwards.]* When Saul was gone.

*And went out of the Cave, and cried after Saul, saying, My Lord the King.]* A bold Attempt to adventure to come into the Presence of such an enraged Enemy. But his Innocence and Confidence in God emboldened him, especially having so strong an Evidence to give him of his Integrity.

*And when Saul looked behind him, David stooped with his Face to the Earth and bowed himself.]* See xx. 41.

Ver. 9. *And David said unto Saul, Wherefore bearest thou Men's Words, saying, behold, David seeketh thy hurt.]* He wisely endeavours, at the Entrance of his Speech, to mollify Saul, by transferring all the blame of his Persecution from him, unto the Sycophants and false Accusers that were about him.

Ver. 10. *Behold, this day thy Eyes have seen that the LORD had delivered thee into my hand in the Cave.]* Out of which he followed Saul.

*And some bad me kill thee, but my Eyes spared thee.]* A Phrase for taking Pity and Compassion upon those whom we have in our power to hurt.

*And I said, I will not put forth my hand against my Lord, for he is the LORD's Anointed.]* He acknowledgeth him both to be his King; and appointed by God so to be.

Ver. 11. *Moreover my Father.]* So he was by the Marriage of his Daughter; and as he was supreme Governour, the Father of his Country. Or if he had not been so, yet this Word was proper to be used, that he might soften and sweeten him into more tender Usage to him.

*See, yea see, the Skirt of thy Robe in my hand.]* He offers him a Demonstration of the Truth of what he declared: And prays him to observe it.

*For in that I cut off the Skirt of thy Robe, and killed thee not; know thou and see.]* Let it convince thee.

*That there is neither Evil nor Transgression in my hand.]* That he had no bad design against him, nor ever attempted to do him any harm. For if he had, it had been as easy to cut his Throat, as to cut off the Skirt of his Robe.

*And I have not sinned against thee, yet thou huntest my Soul, to take it.]* This was a great Aggravation of Saul's Guilt (which makes David repeat it) that he sought the Life of one, who had no way offended him, and when it was in his power, would not hurt him.

Ver. 12. *The LORD judge between me and thee; and the LORD avenge me of thee.]* If he still persisted to persecute him. But he doth not, by these Words, *avenge me of thee,* pray God to punish him for the Injuries he had done him; but only to vindicate and deliver him from his violent and unjust Persecution. So the Hebrew Word *Nakam* often signifies.

*But my hand shall not be upon thee.]* He persisted in his Resolution, not to avenge himself: But leave it to God to do him right.

Ver. 13. *As saith the Proverb of the Ancients, Wickedness proceedeth from the Wicked: but my hand shall not be upon thee.]* Men may be known by their Actions. And this is, as if David had said, were I so bad as I am represented, I should now have shown it: But I will never have my hand in such Crimes. Or thus, it is for wicked Men to do this: But I am none of them.

Ver. 14. *After whom is the King of Israel come out? after whom dost thou pursue?] He turns every Stone, as we speak, to appease Saul's Rage; and tells him in conclusion, that it was below him, and a Disparagement to him to raise Armies against such a mean Person as he was.*



*After a dead Dog, after a Flea.]* He represents himself as contemptible, as it was possible: that he might convince Saul it was not for his Honour to take so much pains to kill him, if he could: For what an inglorious thing was it for a King, with so many armed Men, to triumph over a dead Dog? As if a Lion should hunt after a Flea. *Which* (as *Bochartus* glosses) *if it be sought, is not easily found; and if it be found, is not easily caught; and if it be caught, is a poor Prey, especially for a Prince.*

Ver. 15. *The LORD therefore be Judge, and judge between me and thee: and plead my Cause, and deliver me out of thy hand.]* He thought he could not repeat this too often, that as hitherto, so he resolved hereafter to leave it to God to judge which of them was in the right; and not avenge himself. It may seem strange that *Saul* who came with such an enraged Mind to seek for *David*, should hear him make so long a Speech to him with Patience, and not furiously fall upon him, as soon as he saw him. But we may well think, that at the first he was surprized to see him follow after him out of the Cave; and more astonished to find, after a few words, that it was in *David's* power to kill him, if he had pleased: Which he knew he had, by a long Persecution of him, provoked him to do.

Ver. 16. *And it came to pass, when David had made an end of speaking these Words unto Saul, that Saul said, Is this thy Voice, my Son David?] Tho' he stood at such a distance, that it is likely he could not know him by his Face; yet he very well knew his Voice.*

*And Saul lift up his Voice, and wept.]* His Heart being mollified at present, by this unparallel'd Kindness of *David*, in sparing his Life, when he could have taken it away.

Ver. 17. *And he said unto David, Thou art more righteous than I; for thou hast rewarded me good, whereas I have rewarded thee evil.]* Most Men have their good Moods. And *Saul* now could scarce avoid being touched with a deep sense, how very unjust and unkind he had been to one, who truly loved him.

Ver. 18. *And thou hast shewed this day, how that thou hast dealt well with me: forasmuch, as when the LORD had delivered me into thy hand, thou killedst me not.]* The Demonstration of his Kindness was so clear, that he could not but acknowledge it, and be affected with it.

Ver. 19. *For if a Man find his Enemy, will he let him go well away?] i. e. He will certainly destroy him, to save himself. The Kindness of David therefore was unusual, and without Example.*

*Wherefore the LORD reward thee good, for that thou hast done unto me this day.]* Herein *David* had imitated God; who doth good to the Evil: From whom, *Saul* prays *David* might receive his Reward for the good done to him.

Ver. 20. *And now I know well, that thou shalt surely be King, and that the Kingdom of Israel shall be established in thy hand.]* These wonderful Providences of God over *David*, and *David's* no less wonderful Virtue, at last convinced *Saul* that God designed him to be the King of his People, and that none could hinder his Establishment.

Ver. 21. *Swear now therefore unto me by the LORD, that thou wilt not cut off my Seed after me, and that thou wilt not destroy my Name out of my Father's House.]* As he had endeavoured to destroy *David*; and as Kings frequently destroyed the Family of those, into whose Thrones they were advanced.

Ver. 22. *And David swore unto Saul.]* Who should rather have sworn unto *David*, he would suffer him to live quietly; yea, have invited to return home, and assured him of his Protection. But *David* did not require this: Resolving to trust to God, and not to him. Some question how *David* kept his Oath, when he hanged up seven of *Saul's* Sons, 2 Sam. xxi. But they should consider, that he did not this of himself; but at the desire of the *Gibeonites*, unto whom God required Satisfaction should be given, for *Saul's* bloody Endeavours to destroy them.

*And Saul went home: But David and his Men gat them up into the Hold.] viz. of Engedi.* For he durst not stay in such an open place as he now was in: Knowing *Saul's* Inconstancy, and the Hatred he had to him; and the Fury he was in, when the evil Spirit came upon him. It is dangerous to trust a reconciled Enemy: And the old Saying is very wise, μέμνησο ἀπιστεῖν, remember not to be too credulous. And so the Son of *Sirach*, Ecclus. xii. 10, 11. Never trust thine Enemy. Though he humble himself, yet take good heed, and beware of him.

## C H A P. XXV.

Verse 1. *AND Samuel died.]* According to *Josephus* (Lib. vii. latter end) he governed *Israel* after the Death of *Eli* twelve Years, and lived eighteen in the Reign of *Saul*, and then died. But according to *Sir J. Marsham*, he judged *Israel* sixteen Years before *Saul's* Inauguration; and after he was made King lived eighteen.

*And all the Israelites were gathered together, and lamented him.]* Such was his Virtue, and such was the Love the People bore to him, that the whole Nation bewailed his Loss, and that many Days; as *Josephus* saith, Καὶ ἐπὶ πολλὰς ἡμέρας ἐκλαυσεν.

*And buried him in his House at Ramah.]* The place where he was born, and had long lived: Where, it is likely, there was a place, belonging to his House, in which his Family was interred.

*And David arose and went into the Wilderness of Paran.]* Which was in the southern Parts of *Judæa*, near to *Arabia*: Into which he might presently flee, if there were occasion. The *Mahometan* Writers (as *Hottinger* observes) make *Paran* a part of *Arabia deserta*: So that now it was, that *David* dwelt in the Tents of *Kedar*; which was the same with *Paran*, as our learned *Fuller* observes in his *Miscellanies*.

Ver. 2. *And there was a Man in Maon, whose Possessions were in Carmel.]* There were two *Carmels*: One in the North near the Sea, in the Confines of *Asshur* and *Zebulon*, to which *Elijah* was wont to resort; and another in the South near *Hebron*, in the Tribe of *Judah*, which is here



here meant. See *Josh.* xv. 55. both concerning *Maon* and *Carmel*.

*And the Man was very great, and he had three thousand Sheep, and a thousand Goats.]* A very wealthy Man.

*And he was shearing his Sheep in Carmel.]* They pulled off the Wool at *Rome*, and in the neighbouring Countries (as *Bochartus* observes) but not in *Greece*, nor *Judæa*; where they sheared it, as we do now.

Ver. 3. *And the Name of the Man was Nabal, and the Name of his Wife was Abigail: and she was a Woman of great Understanding, and of a beautiful Countenance; but the Man was churlish, and evil in his doings.]* Uncharitable, and perhaps oppressive in his Dealings.

*And he was of the House of Caleb.]* Descended from a worthy Ancestor, but very unlike him. In the *Hebrew* the word is *Calebi*, a *Calebite*, of the Family of *Caleb*. But the word *Caleb* signifying a *Dog*, some of the ancient Interpreters understand the word here, as if the holy Writer insinuated he was of dog-like Dispositions and Manners. Whence the *LXX* translate it, *ὁ κυνικὸς καὶ κυνικός*, a *dogged Man*, or a *Cynick*. And so the *Syriack* and *Arabick*.

Ver. 4. *And David heard in the Wilderness that Nabal did shear his Sheep.]* For the Wilderness of *Paran* was not far from *Nabal's* House.

Ver. 5. *And David sent out ten young Men.]* To show his great respect to him.

*And David said unto the young Men, Get ye up to Carmel.]* For it was a Mountain, as the other *Carmel* was.

*And go to Nabal, and greet him in my name.]* Present his Service to him, as we now speak; and wish him continued Happiness, as it is in the following words.

Ver. 6. *And thus shall ye say to him that liveth in Prosperity.]* In the *Hebrew* the Words are only, *to him that liveth*: Unto which we add *in Prosperity*; because *Life* in Scripture signifies Happiness, as *Death* signifies Misery.

*Peace be both to thee, and Peace be unto thy House, and Peace to all that thou hast.]* A most affectionate, and comprehensive Salutation: Wherein he wishes well to him (both his Soul and Body) and to his whole Family, and to all that he possessed, either at home or abroad: And some think in the first words, he wishes all this might be perpetuated as long as he lived. There could not well be an higher Compliment, as we now speak: For *Peace* comprehends all manner of Blessings, in the holy Language.

Ver. 7. *And now I have heard that thou hast Shearers.]* Whom he entertained that day.

*Now thy Shepherds which were with us, we hurt them not; neither was there ought missing to them, all the while they were in Carmel.]* He represents the good Demeanour of those who belonged to him, while they were in his Neighbourhood. And suggests, that he would not have had so many Sheep to shear, if his Men had been like others, in their Condition. But tho' they were Soldiers, and in great necessity, they never took any thing from him.

Ver. 8. *Ask thy young Men, and they will show thee.]* He desires him to be informed of the Truth of this, from his own Servants.

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*Wherefore let the young Men find favour in thine eyes (for we come in a good day) give, I pray thee, whatsoever cometh unto thy hand unto thy Servants, and to thy Son David.]* Most humble Words, and full of respect: Mixed with strong Arguments; from their harmless and friendly living in his Neighbourhood; and from the present Festival which he kept, when Men's Hearts use to be open and bountiful: And they did not desire Delicates, but any thing that was at hand, which he could spare.

Ver. 9. *And when David's young Men came, they spake to Nabal according to all these Words in the name of David, and ceased.]* Added nothing of their own, but waited for his Answer in silence, as *Maimonides* interprets it, in his *More Nevochim*, P. i. Cap. 116.

Ver. 10. *Nabal answered David's Servants, and said, Who is David? and who is the Son of Jesse?] A most rude and brutish Answer, to such a civil Message, and humble Request.*

*There be many Servants now-a-days that break every Man from his Master.]* He reproaches them all as a Company of Fugitives and Vagabonds: and taxes *David* secretly, with Infidelity to his Master *Saul*.

Ver. 11. *Shall I take my Bread, and my Water, and my Flesh that I have killed for my Shearers; and give it unto Men, whom I know not whence they are?] A most foolish Speech; when he had just before called David the Son of Jesse: Which shows he knew well enough who he was.*

Ver. 12. *And David's young Men turned their way, and went again, and told him all these Sayings.]* They did not stand arguing with him, or intreating him: But slighted him, as much as he did them.

Ver. 13. *And David said unto his Men, Gird you on every Man his Sword: and they girded on every Man his Sword, and David also girded on his Sword.]* Being resolved, in his Passion, to be revenged on *Nabal*.

*And there went up after David about four hundred Men, and two hundred abode by the Stuff.]* For he had with him six hundred Men in all; as we read before, xxiii. 13.

Ver. 14. *But one of the young Men.]* Belonging unto *Nabal*.

*Told Abigail Nabal's Wife, saying, Behold David sent Messengers out of the Wilderness, to salute our Master, and he railed on them.]* Some of his Servants were wiser and better than he himself, which makes good that Saying of *Seneca* (in his third Book *de Beneficiis*) *Nulii praeclusa est virtus, omnibus patet, &c.* Virtue is shut up from none; it lies open to all. It admits all, it invites all; Free-men and Servants, Kings and Exiles. It makes not choice of such an House, or of such an Estate: But is content with a Man himself. For who can chuse but admire the Wisdom and Fidelity of this Shepherd? who admonished his Mistress of the danger her Family was in; as he rationally concluded from the rude Abuse that had been put upon *David*; whose Merits he honestly set before her.

Ver. 15. *But the Men were very good to us, and we were not hurt; neither missed any thing, as long as we were conversant with them, when we were in the Field.]* They confirm every word

M m 2

that



that *David's* Messengers had told their Master, ver. 7.

Ver. 16. *They were a Wall unto us, both by night and day, all the time we were with them, keeping Sheep.*] They add more than *David's* Men had said of themselves, that they not only did them no hurt, but were a Guard and Defence to them against Robbers, and against wild Beasts.

Ver. 17. *Now therefore know and consider what thou wilt do; for Evil is determined against our Master, and against all his Household.*] This they understood, either from the young Men whom *David* sent, who let fall some words signifying how highly he would resent the Indignity done to him: Or they concluded it from what they had observed of the Nature of *David*; who was very kind, but would not put up rude Affronts.

*For he is such a Son of Belial, that a Man cannot speak to him.*] So wilful and obstinate, that they durst not speak to him of this matter: Fearing he would be more insolent to them, than he had been to *David*.

Ver. 18. *Then Abigail made haste.*] For she was so prudent a Woman as not to neglect the good Advice of a Servant.

*And took two hundred Loaves, and two Bottles of Wine, five Sheep ready dressed, and five Measures of parched Corn, and two hundred Clusters of Raisins, and two hundred Cakes of Figs, and laid them upon Asses.*] This shows he was a great Man, who had such plenty of Provisions in his House. For it is not to be imagined, that she would rob the Shearers of a Festival Day, to gratify *David*.

Ver. 19. *And said unto her Servants, Go before me, behold I come after you.*] They carried the Present; that *David* beholding it, might be a little mitigated before she came to him.

*But she told not her Husband Nabal.*] Who, it is likely, would have persisted in his Folly: Or been so long before he would have been persuaded to be wiser, that it would have been too late to prevent the Danger.

Ver. 20. *And it was so, as she rode upon the Ass, that she came down by the Covert of the Hill.*] By a way full of Bushes, so that *David* saw not her, nor she him, till they met together.

*And behold David and his Men came down against her.*] From another Hill, I suppose.

*And she met them.*] In the Bottom, between the two Hills.

Ver. 21. *Now David had said, Surely in vain have I kept all that this Fellow hath in the Wilderness; so that nothing was missing of all that pertained to him: and he hath requited me evil for good.*] This he said to himself: Or to his Men, as soon as the Messengers came back; or as they were upon the Road to *Nabal's* House.

Ver. 22. *So, and more also, do God unto the Enemies of David.*] He means to himself: But being unwilling to pronounce his own Name, or any other whom he respected, together with a Curse, he transfers it to an Enemy: By a Figure called *Euphemismus*. Or, as some take it, the meaning is, let my Enemy destroy me, if I let *Nabal* and his Family escape. But the former is the plainest Interpretation, it being common in the *Hebrew* Language (as *Job. Cocceius* observes) when they speak of any evil to themselves, to translate it to another Person.

Of which he gives Instances out of *Maccoth*, and *Bava Bathra*. See him upon the *Gemara Sanhedrim*, Cap. 4. Sect. 18. Annot. 1.

*If I leave to him before the Morning-light.*] He intended to fall upon them in the Night, when they were in a dead Sleep, after great Jollity.

*Any that pisseth against the Wall.*] That is (as the Generality of Interpreters think) *so much as a Dog*: This being, they take it, like that Saying of *Aurelian* mentioned by *Vopiscus*, who going to a City, and finding the Gates shut against him, said in his Wrath, *Canem in hoc oppido non relinquam*, I will not leave a Dog in this Town. But *Bochartus* excepts to this Interpretation, that all Dogs do not piss against the Wall, but only the Males; and that not 'till they be six or eight Months old: as *Aristotle* and others observe. And therefore (to omit his other Reasons) he takes this Phrase to be a *Periphrasis* of a Man: As the *Hebrews* expound it, particularly *Rabbi*. So that it is as much as to say, *I will not leave a Man alive*.

Ver. 23. *And when Abigail saw David, she hastened, and lighted off the Ass, and fell before David on her Face, and bowed her self to the ground.*] Both out of Reverence to him as a great Man; and as an humble Suppliant, for pardon of a great Offence.

Ver. 24. *And fell at his feet, and said, Upon me, my Lord, upon me let this Iniquity be.*] She applies herself to him, in a Speech full of Art and Prudence: And first begs, like a kind Wife, that she might suffer, not her Husband; who was not so wise as he should be.

*And let thine Handmaid, I pray thee, speak in thy Audience, and bear the Words of thy Handmaid.*] She desires him patiently to hear her Reasons.

Ver. 25. *Let not my Lord, I pray thee, regard this Man of Belial, even Nabal: for as his Name is, so is he; Nabal is his Name, and Folly is with him.*] She represents him as a Man that offended out of Folly rather than Malice: Which might a little excuse his Rudeness. There are many such Allusions in Scripture, as there is here of *Nebala* and *Nabal*. See *Gen. v. 25. xlix. 8, 16, 19. and Zephan. ii. 4.*

*But I, thine Handmaid, saw not the young Men of my Lord, whom thou dost send.*] If any were to be punished, she had desired it might be herself; yet she had this to say in her own behalf, that she knew nothing of the Message sent by *David*.

Ver. 26. *Now therefore, my Lord, as the LORD liveth, and as thy Soul liveth, seeing the LORD hath withholden thee from coming to shed Blood, and from avenging thy self with thine own hand.*] This is wonderfully artificial, to presume so much upon his Goodness and Clemency, as already to conclude, she had diverted him from his purpose; or rather, that God had interposed by his good Providence, to hinder him from shedding Blood.

*Now let thine Enemies, and they that seek evil to my Lord, be as Nabal.*] That is, may thou have no worse Enemy than he. Or, may thy Enemies have no more power to hurt thee, than *Nabal* hath. This is another Argument to persuade him to Mercy, that *Nabal* was so inconsiderable, that as he would do him no good, so he could do him no evil.



Ver. 27. *And now this Blessing.*] That is, this Present or Gift. The same Phrase in xxx. 26. 2 Kings v. 15.

*Which thine Handmaid hath brought unto my Lord, let it even be given unto the young Men that follow my Lord.*] To appease their Anger: Or, as unworthy of David's Acceptance.

Ver. 28. *I pray thee forgive the Trespasts of thine Handmaid.*] She still speaks as if she had been the Offender; because she desired none might suffer but herself.

*For the LORD will certainly make my Lord a sure House.*] She prays him to be good to her, as God would certainly be to him.

*Because my Lord fighteth the Battels of the LORD; and Evil hath not been found in thee all thy days.*] Se puts him in mind of all his Heroical Acts against the Philistines, and other Enemies; and that hitherto he had been blameless, and done no hurt to the Israelites: And therefore hoped he would do none to her, and her Family.

Ver. 29. *Yet a Man is risen to pursue thee and to seek thy Soul.*] Saul she means restlessly endeavoured to take away his Life.

*But the Soul of my Lord shall be bound in the Bundle of Life, with the LORD thy God.*] Be preserved. For those things which we would not have lost, nor scattered about, we are wont to bind up in Bundles.

*And the Souls of thine Enemies, them shall he sling out, as out of the middle of a Sling.*] As we bind up things to preserve them from being thrown about, and lost; so we put things into a Sling, that they may be cast out of sight, or a great way from us.

Ver. 30. *And it shall come to pass, when the LORD shall have done to my Lord, according to all the good that he hath spoken concerning thee, and shall have appointed thee Ruler over Israel.*] Nothing could be more obliging than this, at every word to call him her Lord, and to acknowledge his Title to the Kingdom; and her belief that he would certainly enjoy it.

Ver. 31. *That this shall be no Grief unto thee, nor offence of Heart to my Lord, either that thou hast shed Blood causeless, or that my Lord hath avenged himself.*] She reserves the most divine Argument to the last; that he would have a clear and quiet Conscience, and not be disturbed with a Remembrance that he had shed the Blood of the Innocent, or otherwise avenged himself: which belonged unto God.

*And when the LORD hath dealt well with my Lord, remember thine Handmaid.*] Thou wilt thank me for my Advice.

Ver. 32. *And David said to Abigail, Blessed be the LORD God of Israel, which sent thee this day to meet me.*] He was so moved with this pathetical Speech, that in the first place, he acknowledges the good Providence of God, which directed her to come so seasonably to prevent the Effects of his Anger: Whereby he was absolved from his Oath, which he had sworn to cut off Nabal's Family. And indeed it was null in itself; for no Man can oblige himself to do an evil thing; as this would have been: There being a double Guilt in it, as Philo observes, if he had shed their Blood. To which may be applied the Words of Seneca, that in such Cases, *scelus*

*est fides*, to keep one's word, is a wicked thing. See Grotius de Jure B. & P. lib. 2. Cap. 13. Sect. 6. Where he observes that Cicero mentions the like Case with this in the Vow of Agamemnon. And Procopius Gazæus here well resolves, that this Oath of David was the effect of Anger; but his sparing Nabal the effect of Reason and prudent Counsel.

Ver. 33. *And blessed be thy Advice, and blessed be thou, which hast kept me this day from coming to shed Blood, and from avenging my self with my own hand.*] Next, he commends her, and her wise Counsel; for which he beseeches God to bless her: For she had preserved him from a very outrageous piece of Revenge; which might have afflicted him all his days.

Ver. 34. *For in very deed, as the LORD God of Israel liveth, which hath kept me back from hurting thee, except thou hadst hasted and come to meet me, surely there had not been left unto Nabal, by the morning light, any that pisseth against the Wall.*] It may seem strange that his Anger should not cool, in so much time as passed between the return of his Messengers, and Abigail's meeting him: But the Affront was great, and his Soldiers it is likely inflamed his Rage, and he resolved to make Nabal an Example to others, not to use him so rudely.

Ver. 35. *So David received of her hand that which she brought, and said unto her, Go in peace unto thy House: for I have hearkened unto thy Voice, and have accepted thy Person.*] Both she herself, and what she said, and what she brought were most welcome to him. So happy a thing it is (as Euripides speaks in his *Heraclidæ*, verse 359.) to fall into the hand of a wife, and not a foolish Enemy. For the latter, if he get the better, exercises nothing but Cruelty: But with the former there is room for Mercy, Justice, Moderation, and Pardon. Such an Enemy Abigail met withal; unto whom Nabal's Offence was not more provoking to the Destruction of his Family, than the Admiration of Abigail's Virtue to its Preservation.

Ver. 36. *And Abigail came to Nabal; and behold, he held a Feast in his House like the Feast of a King: and Nabal's Heart was merry within him, for he was very drunken.*] He had eaten and drank too liberally, at a very great Feast, which he made for his Shearers.

*Wherefore she told him nothing, less or more, 'till the morning-light.*] Said not a word of what had passed, because he was not capable to understand the Mercy of God to him.

Ver. 37. *But it came to pass in the Morning; when the Wine was gone out of Nabal.*] When he had slept himself sober.

*And his Wife told him of these things, that his Heart died within him, and he became as a Stone.*] He fainted away, and was as cold as a Stone; out of dread of the Danger, which he imagined still hung over him. For it is a frigid Interpretation of *Rasi* and *Kimchi*, that he was troubled to hear of the great Present that his Wife had made to David.

Ver. 38. *And it came to pass, that about ten days after, the LORD smote Nabal, that he died.*] It seems he lay so long dispirited, in a stupid senseless Condition; and then God put an end to his Life, either by some Disease, or by a sudden stroke.

Ver.



Ver. 39. *And when David heard that Nabal was dead, he said, Blessed be the LORD, who hath pleaded the Cause of my Reproach upon the head of Nabal; and hath kept his Servant from Evil: for the LORD hath returned the Wickedness of Nabal upon his own head.*] He doth not rejoice so much in his Death (who was a worthless Wretch) as in the Justice of God: Who showed him, that if Men would have patience, they should see Right done them; so that they need not go about to revenge themselves.

*And David sent and communed with Abigail, to take her to him to wife.*] Being a Woman of admirable Prudence, as well as Beauty, (ver. 3.) and one that expressed an high Esteem of him, he sent some to treat with her about Marriage with him.

Ver. 40. *And when the Servants of David were come to Abigail to Carmel, they spake unto her saying, David sent us unto thee, to take thee unto him to wife.*] This was their Business: Which no doubt they delivered in many more Words, which signified the great Esteem and Affection which David had for her; whom he knew to be a Woman of such great Wisdom, that she had respect not merely to his present, but to his future Condition. Otherwise, he would not have adventured, being now very poor, to court one that had such Riches.

Ver. 41. *And she arose, and bowed her self with her Face to the Earth.*] In reverence to the very Name of David: Who she highly honoured, as a Man of an heroick Spirit; and who she was fully persuaded should be King of Israel, ver. 30.

*And she said, Behold, let thine Handmaid be a Servant to wash the Feet of the Servants of my Lord.*] She sent him an Answer in these Words; which show her Humility to be as great, as her other Virtues: for to wash one's Feet was the lowest sort of Service.

Ver. 42. *And Abigail hasted, and arose and rode upon an Ass, with five Damsels of hers, that went after her.*] That she might come attended suitable to her Quality and his. See Grotius, Gen. xxx. 3.

*And she went after the Messengers of David.*] Tho' she did not long deliberate about the Matter, but soon consented; yet it is not likely she followed them immediately: But staid some decent time before she went to David.

*And became his Wife.*] She had a strong Faith in God, to marry a Man who had nothing to live upon, but was forced to wander from place to place, and beg the Assistance of his Friends. But she verily believed he would at last come to the Throne, as she had before expressed: And could make some Provision for him out of her own Estate.

Ver. 43. *David also took Abinoam of Jezreel, and they were also both of them his Wives.*] At the same time; according to the corrupt Custom of those Days, wherein they had perverted the Law of Nature, which is admirably expressed by Euripides in his *Andromache*, ver. 177, &c.

— καὶ γὰρ καλὸν  
Δ: σὺ γυναικὶς ἀνδρὶ ἐν ἡμέρᾳ ἔχειν, &c.

*It is not good for one Husband to govern two Wives: But he should be content with one, who would live happily.*

And again, ver. 909.

κακὸν δ' ἔλεξας ἐν ἀνδρὶ διδοῖ ἔχειν λέσχην.

*Thou hast said, it is an evil thing for one Man to have two Wives.*

For where there are more than one, they seldom agree, but breed great Trouble to their Husband. It is commonly thought, that Abinoam was his Wife before he married Abigail. See upon xxvii. 3.

Ver. 44. *And Saul.*] Or rather for Saul, the Particle *Vau* being often so used.

*Had given Michal his Daughter, David's Wife, to Phalti the Son of Laish.*] Here is the reason why David took another Wife; because Saul had deprived him of his former: But it was no good Reason for taking two, which were more than he had before. He was not forced from Michal, and therefore we read afterwards that he took her again. And the Jewish Doctors are of opinion that this Phalti was a very pious Man, and would never touch her, because she was another Man's Wife: Which was the Reason David received her again. See 1 Sam. iii. 15.

*Which was of Gallim.*] A Town near Accaron, as Eusebius and St. Hierom tell us: Which had its Name from Gal, an heap of Stones; it being, I suppose, a stony Place.

## C H A P. XXVI.

Verse 1. *AND the Ziphites.*] The old Enemies of David, xxiii. 19.

*Came unto Saul to Gibeah, saying, Doth not David hide himself in the hold of Hachilah, which is before Jeshimon?*] He thought he might safely return thither, Saul having so lately made peace with him. The Ziphites also could not but hear how he had obliged Saul, and what Declaration Saul had made, that he knew David would be King of Israel, xxiv. 20. Which David thought might discourage them from meddling any more. But quite contrary, they being afraid, if he came to be King, he would remember and revenge their ill usage of him, went to excite Saul to destroy him.

Ver. 2. *Then Saul arose, and went down to the Wilderness of Ziph, with three thousand Men of Israel with him.*] The same Number he had the last time he pursued after him, xxiv. 2.

*To seek David in the Wilderness of Ziph.*] The Inconstancy, Falseness, and implacable Rage of this Prince is inconceivable. Who having not long ago been obliged to David for his Life, and had acknowledged his Error, and made David swear he would be good to his Posterity, yet openly declared himself again to be his Enemy, and sought to kill him.

Ver. 3. *And Saul pitched in the Hill of Hachilah, which is before Jeshimon, by the way.*] That is, by the way that went to the Wilderness.



*But David abode in the Wilderness; and he saw that Saul came after him into the Wilderness.]* He thought at first his Intelligence had not been true; but he was credibly informed, that Saul's Wrath was broke out again, and that he intended to come thither.

Ver. 4. *And David therefore sent out Spies; and understood that Saul was come in very deed.]* A good Captain always hath Scouts abroad: who assured him his Information was true; and that Saul was not far from him.

Ver. 5. *And David arose, and came to a place, where Saul had pitched.]* Within sight of it; where he might observe how they lay.

*And David beheld where Saul lay, and Abner the Son of Ner, the Captain of the Host.]* Who, it is likely, lay near him.

*And Saul lay in the Trench.]* Or rather, in his Chariot, for so the LXX translate the Hebrew Word by λαμπήνη, or as some Editions have it, ἀπλήνη: Which signifies a Chariot drawn by Mules, as Bochartus shows out of Homer, and other Authors, P. 1. Hierozoicon, L. 2. Cap. 19.

*And the People lay round about him.]* He was inclosed, I suppose, with the Carriages; as our Marginal Translation is of the foregoing Word.

Ver. 6. *Then answered David and said to Abimelech the Hittite.]* A valiant Man of that Nation, who was a Profelyte to the Jewish Religion: And not only followed David, but was always near to his Person.

*And to Abishai the Son of Zeruiab, Brother to Joab.]* Who were the Sons of David's Sister, 1 Chron. xi. 16. whose Father is nowhere mentioned; being a Man, I suppose, of no note.

*Saying, who will go down with me to Saul to the Camp.]* That is, which of these two.

*And Abishai said, I will go down with thee.]* Either Abimelech declined it, as too hazardous an Enterprize: Or Abishai, being an hot forward young Man, offered himself, while the other stood deliberating.

Ver. 7. *So David and Abishai came to the People by night.]* A bold Attempt for two Men to come into the midst of an Army of three thousand chosen Men: Who were not without a Watch; tho' they were now asleep. But a strong Confidence in God's Promise that he would preserve him, overcame all Fear of Danger.

*And behold, Saul lay sleeping within the Trench, and his Spear stuck in the ground at his Bolster: but Abner and the People lay round about him.]* To secure his Person from any sudden Assault.

Ver. 8. *Then said Abishai to David, God hath delivered thine Enemy into thy hand this day: Now therefore let me smite him, I pray thee, with the Spear, even to the Earth at once; and I will not smite him the second time.]* Tho' David would not kill him himself, when he had the like Opportunity (xxiv. 4.) yet Abishai thought he might give him leave to do it: And he undertook to stick him to the ground at one thrust, so that he should make no noise by crying out.

Ver. 9. *And David said to Abishai, destroy him not: For who can stretch forth his hand against the*

*LORD's Anointed, and be guiltless?] Being made King by God's special Appointment, he look'd upon it as a high Crime to do him any hurt; because he was a sacred Person.*

Ver. 10. *David said furthermore, As the LORD liveth, the LORD shall smite him, or his day shall come to die, or he shall descend into Battel, and perish.]* God who made him King, after a solemn manner, could only depose him: And that he could do several ways; either by a sudden Stroke; or in the course of Nature, or letting him fall in Battel.

Ver. 11. *The LORD forbid, that I should stretch my hand against the LORD's Anointed.]* What he permitted another to do, when he could hinder it, was as if he had done it himself. But he abhorred to meddle with that, which belonged to God, as he had before said.

*But I pray thee, take now the Spear that is at his Bolster.]* As a witness what they could have done, if Respect to God, whose Anointed he was, had not withheld them.

*And the Cruse of Water, and let us go.]* This was set there, either for him to drink, if he was thirsty: Or to wash himself; which was prescribed by their Law in case of many Pollutions.

Ver. 12. *So David took the Spear and the Cruse of Water.]* By the Hand of Abishai: Who like an excellent Soldier was perfectly subject to his Commander, to forbear, or to do whatsoever David enjoined him.

*And gat them away, and no Man saw it, or knew it, neither awaked: for they were all asleep, because a deep Sleep from the LORD was fallen upon them.]* The Jewish Doctors in Bereschith Rabba observe, that there are three sorts of that they call Tardama, which is the Hebrew word for deep Sleep in this Place. The first mere sound Sleep, which God sent upon Adam, Gen. xi. 21. The second is the deep Sleep of Prophecy, which he sent upon Abraham, Gen. xv. 12. The third is this here mentioned, which they call the Sleep Marmorita (it should be printed Marmota, as Bochart observes) which is a little Creature more drowsy than a Dormouse. Hierozoicon, P. 1. Lib. 3. Cap. 33.

Ver. 13. *Then David went over to the other side, and stood on the top of an Hill afar off (a great space being between them.)* So that he was in Safety, and yet his Voice might be heard.

Ver. 14. *And David cried unto the People, and to Abner the Son of Ner, saying, Answerest thou not, Abner?] Art thou still asleep?*

*Then Abner answered, and said, Who art thou that criest unto the King?] And disturbest his Repose.*

Ver. 15. *And David said unto Abner, Art not thou a valiant Man, &c.]* In the Hebrew the Words are, *Art not thou a Man?* That is, in Place of Authority, as well as of great Courage and Valour.

*Wherefore hast thou not kept thy Lord the King.]* Observed better military Discipline, for the Preservation of Saul's Person.

*For there came one of the People in to destroy the King thy Lord.]* Came into the Camp with that Intention, and had a very fair Opportunity.



Ver. 16. *This thing is not good that thou hast done.*] A soft way of speaking: But the meaning was, that he was very faulty, as appears by what follows.

*Ye are worthy to die, because ye have not kept your Master, the LORD's Anointed.*] Guarded him better from any Danger. It is probable they despised David's small Forces, which made them so grossly negligent.

*Now see where the King's Spear is, and the Cruse of Water that was at his Bolster.*] He sets before them the Tokens of their Carelessness; and of the Opportunity he had to kill Saul.

Ver. 17. *And Saul knew David's Voice, and said, Is this thy Voice, my Son David?*] He was in great Confusion of Mind, and knew not what more to say to him.

*And David said, It is my Voice, my Lord, O King.*] He humbly acknowledgeth his Authority; and the Allegiance he owed him: Tho' he had done him so many Injuries.

Ver. 18. *And he said, Wherefore doth my Lord thus pursue after his Servant? for what have I done, or what evil is in my hand?*] Being conscious of his own Innocence, David expostulates with him in a long Speech: And desires in the first place, to know what Crime he had to accuse him of: especially since he lately acknowledged that he was more righteous than himself, xxiv. 17.

Ver. 19. *Now therefore, I pray thee, let my Lord the King hear the Words of thy Servant.*] Having no Answer to that Question, he desires him to be so patient, as to suffer him to argue a while with him.

*If the LORD have stirred thee up against me, let him accept an Offering.*] For God is not implacable, but willing to be reconciled, if I have offended him. Or the meaning may be, if for any Offence against God there be just Cause for this Anger, I refuse not to die, and expiate the Fault with my Blood. Or the words may refer to Saul, as if he had said, Offer to God some Sacrifice, that he being appeased, may free thee from this pertinacious Melancholy.

*But if they be the Children of Men, cursed be they before the LORD, for they have driven me out this day from abiding in the Inheritance of the LORD.*] From having any settled Abode in his own Country; which he foresaw he should be forced also to leave, as we read he did in the next Chapter.

*Saying, go serve other Gods.*] That was the effect of their Actions, tho' they did not say so in so many Words. For they banished him into a Nation of another Religion, as Mr. Mede expounds these Words. See Book 3. p. 823.

Ver. 20. *Now therefore let not my Blood fall to the Earth, before the Face of the LORD.*] God seeing it, and being the Avenger.

*For the King of Israel cometh out to seek a Flea.*] Which was neither for his Profit nor for his Glory. See xxiv. 14.

*As when one doth hunt a Partridge in the Mountains.*] Hunt a poor Bird from mountain to mountain, with a great deal of Labour, which is not easily caught, and worth nothing when one hath it: The Hebrew word *Kore* is no where to be found, but here and in Jer. xvii. 11. from both which places, we learn it was a mountainous

Bird, and of no great value: in taking of which, the Fowler spent his pains to little purpose. And it was one of those Birds, that sits upon the Eggs of other Birds, as the words of *Jeremiah* import, *she gathereth what she hath not brought forth*, that is, Eggs which she did not lay. From which it is apparent, that this word doth not signify a *Partridge*, which is a Bird of Price, and doth not sit on other Birds Eggs: But, as *Bochart* hath taken a great deal of pains to show, was a Bird with a long Bill, and short Feet, called *Rusticula*. I will not mention the Opinions of Interpreters about it, for they are very various, and the same Men are not constant to themselves; for *R. Solomon*, who here takes it for a *Partridge*, in that place of the Prophet *Jeremiah*, takes it for a *Cuckow*. See *Hieroicoicon*, P. 2. L. 1. C. 12.

Ver. 21. *Then said Saul, I have sinned, return my Son David.*] He invites him to come to the Court again; which is more than he did at their former meeting.

*For I will no more do thee harm, because my Soul was precious in thine eyes this day: I have played the fool, and have erred exceedingly.*] This is a very ingenuous Confession, wherein he condemned himself, as a great Offender against God, and against David. In which for the present, no doubt he was very serious, and both ashamed and sorry for what he had done.

Ver. 22. *And David answered and said, Behold the King's Spear, let one of the young Men come over and fetch it.*] He durst not venture to go and present it himself to Saul, tho' it was the Testimony of his Fidelity and Affection to him. For he did not know but the evil Spirit might come on a sudden upon him, and make him change his good Resolution.

Ver. 23. *The LORD render to every Man according to his Righteousness and Faithfulness: for the LORD delivered thee this day into my hand, but I would not stretch forth my hand against the LORD's Anointed.*] He repeats what Saul had confessed, the more to affect his Heart with it: and tells him he doubted not the LORD would deal with him accordingly, howsoever Saul used him.

Ver. 24. *Behold, as thy Life was set by this day in mine eyes, so let my Life be set by in the sight of the LORD, and let him deliver me out of all Tribulation.*] He prays God to deal with him, as he had done with Saul; and then he doubted not to come out of all his Troubles.

Ver. 25. *And Saul said unto David, Blessed be thou, my Son David; thou shalt do great things, and also shalt still prevail.*] He perceived it was in vain to contend any longer against David, whom God designed for great things (as he saw by his most worthy and noble Actions) and would still have the better of him, 'till he came to the Throne: for possibly Saul look'd upon the taking away his Spear, which I observed (upon xxii. 6.) was his Scepter, as an Omen the Royal Authority should be translated to David.

*So David went on his way, and Saul returned to his Place.*] To Gibeah, from whence he came, ver. 1. but David did not think fit to accompany him, remembering how fickle he was, and therefore, notwithstanding all those good Words, not to be trusted.



C H A P. XXVII.

Verse 1. **A**ND David said in his heart, *I shall now perish one day by the hand of Saul.*] Whose Heart he believed was not altered, though he had felt lately some Compunction for what he had done against him. But David had the greatest reason to believe he would never be able to compass his Design, having God's Promise he should be King of Israel; therefore these Words were spoken in a melancholy Fit, when he was under some great Depression of Spirit.

*There is nothing better for me than that I should speedily escape into the Land of the Philistines: and Saul shall despair of me, to seek me any more in any Coast of Israel; so shall I escape out of his hand.*] He thought that as long as he remained in any part of Saul's Dominions, he would never cease his Persecution: But by going into an Enemy's Country, he would be forced to be quiet.

Ver. 2. *And David arose, and he passed over with the six hundred Men that were with him, unto Achish the Son of Maach, King of Gath.*] It is not certain that this was the same Achish mentioned xxi. 10. with whom David took shelter at his first flight from Saul. He seems rather to have been another, who is distinguished from the former by the Name of his Father. But whichever he was, he had either invited David to come thither for his Security (hoping to make use of his Valour, or his Prudence in his Wars) or David had sent Embassadors before to treat with him, and had his Royal Word, that he should be protected by him. And it appears afterwards, that he had David in great Esteem; for he gave him a Town for his own Inheritance, ver. 6.

Ver. 3. *And David dwelt with Achish at Gath, he and his Men, every Man with his Household: even David with his two Wives, Abinoam the Jezreelite, and Abigail the Carmelite, Nabal's Wife.*] It was a very capacious Place, that could contain so many Men and their Families; some of which might be numerous. And Achish was very generous to receive so many Strangers and old Soldiers into his Royal City, as might have made themselves Masters of it. Abinoam being here mentioned before Abigail, hath made many think she was his Wife before he took the other.

Ver. 4. *And it was told Saul that David was fled to Gath, and he sought no more again for him.*] Unto which, it is likely, he was inclined; if he had not found it to be in vain.

Ver. 5. *And David said unto Achish, If I have now found grace in thine Eyes, let them give me a Place in some Town in the Country, that I may dwell there: for why should thy Servant dwell in the Royal City with thee?*] This he said, that he might avoid Envy. For perhaps he might have too much the Port of a King; having so many Men at his Service, and being attended, no doubt, with a considerable number of them about his Person. In a private Town also he might more freely exercise his own Religion; without any Offence to the Philistines, who worshipped other Gods.

Ver. 6. *Then Achish gave him Ziklag that day.*] Either out of his Royal Bounty, or on condition of some Service he should do him.

*Wherefore Ziklag pertaineth unto the Kings of Judah unto this day.*] In the Division of the Land of Canaan, it was first given unto the Tribe of Judah, Josh. xv. 31. and afterwards to that of Simeon, who had a Portion out of the Land given to Judah, Josh. xix. 5. But the Philistines kept possession of it; so that neither of them enjoyed it; till now it became by Achish his Gift the peculiar Inheritance of David and his Successors.

Ver. 7. *And the time that David dwelt in the Country of the Philistines, was a full Year and four Months.*] How long he wandered up and down, till he settled here, we are nowhere told: But it is probable the Persecution of Saul lasted a great while.

Ver. 8. *And David and his Men went out and invaded the Geshurites, and the Gezerites, and the Amalekites; for those Nations were of old the Inhabitants of the Land, as thou goest to Shur, even unto the Land of Egypt.*] The Geshurites and Gezerites were both of them Reliques of the Canaanites, whom God commanded to be rooted out. See Grotius. The Amalekites, who were near, had been destroyed by Saul, but not these that were afar off: Or perhaps these were some that fled into these remote Parts, when they heard Saul was coming against them. And the following Words, (ver. 11. of David's killing all) must be understood, that he left none alive whom he found in these Parts: But there still were Amalekites in other Places, xxx. 1. Abarbinel imagines all the People here mentioned were at enmity with Achish, and hated him and his People: So that when David smote them, he made no Complaint about it.

Ver. 9. *And David smote the Land, and left neither Man nor Woman alive, and took away the Sheep, and the Oxen, and the Asses, and the Camels, and the Apparel, and returned and came to Achish.*] To give an account of his Actions, and to present him, I suppose, with part of the Spoil.

Ver. 10. *And Achish said, Whither have ye made a rode to day?*] For David, it is likely, constantly kept his Men in Exercise, upon some Expedition or other.

*And David said, against the South of Judah, and against the South of the Jerahmeelites, and against the South of the Kenites.*] He answers Achish cunningly, in such ambiguous Words, that he might understand him as if he had assaulted the Land of Judah; whereas he only fell upon those People who bordered on those Parts which he mentions. For these Countries lay on the South of Judah: and the Jerahmeelites were a Part of Judaea, and the Kenites of the Family of Jethro, were their Neighbours, and Confederates.

Ver. 11. *And David saved neither Man nor Woman alive to bring Tidings to Gath, saying, lest they should tell on us, saying, so did David, and so will be his manner all the while he dwells in the Country of the Philistines.*] Who had People of some Countries thereabouts; perhaps Tributaries to them, and under their Protection: Whom they might fear David would serve in the same manner, had they known how he dealt with these.







*And his Servants said unto him, There is a Woman that hath a familiar Spirit.]* There are always some Flatterers in Courts, who will never contradict their Princes; but are ready to comply with them in their worst Designs. And it appears by this, that though this sort of Divination was not publicly practised, yet it was known that there were some who privately continued to consult the Dead. I say *publicly*, because it is very probable that before *Saul* executed the Law against them, there were those that made Profession of having familiar Spirits, as there were among the Heathen. For *Plutarch*, in the Life of *Cimon*, speaks of *Pausanias* going to a Νεκρομαντεῖον (an Oracle of the Dead) at *Heraclea*, where he called up the Soul of *Cleonice*.

*At Endor.]* A Place in the Tribe of *Manasseh*, *Josh.* xvii. 11. not far from *Shunem*, as *Salianus* observes: And part of the Mountain of *Gilboa* was over-against *Endor*, and another part of it against *Shunem*. This Woman, the Jewish Doctors say, was the Mother of *Abner*.

Ver. 8. *And Saul disguised himself, and put on other raiment, and went, and two Servants with him.]* He put off his Royal Apparel, and cloathed himself like an ordinary Man, having but a small Attendance; that he might not be suspected to be what he was. These two Servants, the Jewish Doctors say, were *Abner* and *Amasa*.

*And they came to the Woman by night.]* They could not go the direct way, for then they must have passed through the Army of the *Philistines*: And therefore they fetched a Compass, and travelled also by Night, that they might not be discovered. And it is likely they went on foot, that less notice might be taken of them; and they might go and return through by-ways, which made their Journey the longer. In the Night also it was, that Women went about such magical Practices. For, as *Pfellus* observes in his Book of *Dæmons*, it is the common Opinion of the *Greeks*, that none of the Terrestrial *Dæmons* dare appear in the Day time. Ἑλληνικῆς γὰρ ἔστι δόξης τὸ μὴδενα τῶν ἐνύλων δαιμόνων θάρρειν τὰς τῆ ἡλίου αὐγὰς. Nay, he saith all those things were performed after the Summer Solstice; when the Days grew short, and the Nights increased.

*And he said, Divine unto me by the familiar Spirit, and bring me him up whom I shall name unto thee.]* This consulting the Dead, was a very ancient Practice among the *Gentiles*, as appears from *Homer*: But long before him, mentioned by *Moses* himself, who forbids it in *Deut.* xviii. 10. Notwithstanding which, the *Israelites*, who had a Divine Oracle, and holy Prophets to guide them, fell into this foul Sin, as they did into most of the *Gentile* Abominations.

Ver. 9. *And the Woman said unto him, Behold, thou knowest what Saul hath done, how he hath cut off those who have familiar Spirits and Wizards out of the Land: wherefore then layest thou a snare for my Life, to cause me to die?]* For so the Law was, *Levit.* xx. 27. And *Saul* seems by the Woman's Speech to have executed it, for she saith he had cut them off; whereas it is only said, that he had put them away: As if

he had failed in his Duty, and merely banished such Persons, when he should have put them to death.

Ver. 10. *And Saul swore unto her by the LORD, saying, As the LORD liveth, there shall no Punishment happen to thee for this thing.]* An Oath was so sacred a Thing in those Days, that they entirely relied upon it, and ventured their Lives upon its Credit.

Ver. 11. *Then said the Woman, whom shall I bring up to thee? and he said, bring me up Samuel.]* It is a wonderful Thing, that he should believe a Woman should have power to disturb the Rest of *Samuel*, and bring him thither at her Command: But he was forsaken by God, and grown delirious.

Ver. 12. *And when the Woman saw Samuel.]* Here Interpreters are very much divided; some imagining it was *Samuel* himself that appeared: Others, a Spectre, which by the Power of the Devil appeared in his likeness. Several of the ancient Fathers are of the former Opinion, and particularly *Justin Martyr*: Who in his Dialogue with *Trypho* the Jew, alledges this as a Demonstration of the Immortality of the Soul, p. 333. And most of the *Roman Church* are now of the same mind. But *Tertullian* saith (in his Book, *De Anima*, Cap. 57.) *God forbid we should believe the Soul of any holy Man, much less of a Prophet, should be brought up by the Power of the Devil.* Of this Persuasion are a great Number of the Ancients, particularly *St. Cyril of Alexandria*; who thinks it the greatest Absurdity to believe, that a wretched Woman should call up *Samuel's* Soul; the *Dæmons*, with whom such People deal, having no such Power. And so *St. Hierom* calls this *Samuelis Phantasma*. Yet there are vast Numbers of modern Authors, who think that by God's Permission, or Dispensation, the Soul of *Samuel* might appear: Which *Sir John Marsham* himself takes not to be improbable: See *Chron. Canon.* xiii. But the very Letter of the Text seems to me to be against this Opinion: Which speaks of bringing him up, and his coming up out of the Earth; whereas, if it had been *Samuel*, he should rather have come down from Heaven. This Apparition therefore was one of those fallacious Spirits, whom *Porphyry* speaks of (*Lib. 2. De Abstinentiâ*) who put on any Shape, and counterfeit (as his Words are) the Gods, and *Dæmons*, and the Souls of the Dead, γένεσις ἀπαταλῆς φύσεως παντόμορφον καὶ πολύτροπον, ὑποκρινόμενον καὶ θεῶν, καὶ δαίμονας, καὶ ψυχὰς τεθνήκόντων. Which a very learned Person (*Job. Wagenfeil*) hath confirmed, by this Reason, which to me seems very solid; that since God was not pleased to answer *Saul* (as he confessed) either by Prophets, or by Dreams, or by *Urim* and *Thummim*, but had withdrawn himself wholly from him, it is not probable, that he would send *Samuel* himself to him from the Dead (and none else could do it) and that at the Call of a Witch: When he would not favour him with any Revelation from a living Prophet, or any other way. *Confut. Car. Lipmanni*, p. 198.

*She cried with a loud Voice: and the Woman spake to Saul, saying, Why hast thou deceived me? for thou art Saul.]* She cried out for fear of



*Saul*: When she perceived, by the Reverence the Spectre paid him, who he was. For so *Abarbinel* interprets it, he bowed with his Face to the ground, in honour of *Saul*, whereby the Woman concluded he was the King.

Ver. 13. *And the King said unto her, Be not afraid.*] Do not imagine I come with any design to discover thee, and bring thee to Punishment.

*For what sawest thou?*] But tell me what appeared to thee.

*And she said, I saw Gods ascending out of the earth.*] By the word *Elohim* the Jews understand a Judge: For so Judges are called in *Psalms* lxxxii. 1, 6. *Peter Martyr* therefore interprets it not amiss, a Person very majestick, like a Judge or a King. And so *R. Esaias* mentioned by *Vorstius* upon *Pirke Eliezer*, p. 113. who by *Elohim* understands *hominem insignis atque excelsæ staturæ*, a Man of an eminent and high Stature; as the Scripture calls high Trees and Mountains, *Trees and Mountains of God*. And he is said, *to ascend out of the Earth*. For so the Heathen endeavoured (as *Homer*, *Virgil*, *Statius*, and other ancient Poets tell us) to bring up the Dead out of the Earth, to give them Answers to their Doubts. Which wicked Custom prevailed long among the Jews; for *Isaiah* alludes to it in xxix. 4. when he saith they should be brought so low, as to speak like a familiar Spirit out of the Ground, and whisper out of the Dust. And it is evident likewise from *Isa.* lxiv. 4. that they were wont to go to the Sepulchres of the Dead, there to consult them. For that's the Meaning of *sacrificing in Gardens*, ver. 3. for there they were wont to bury their Dead.

Ver. 14. *And he said unto her, What form is he of?*] This is an Argument he saw nothing; but afterwards heard a Voice.

*And she said, an old Man cometh up, and he is covered with a Mantle.*] Such as Kings wore, and also Prophets; who had very great Authority, xv. 27. 2 *Kings* ii. 8, 13. The Hebrew word *Meil* signifies as much as the Greek *ποδήρης*, a long Garment which came down to the Feet.

*And Saul perceived that it was Samuel, and he stooped with his face to the ground, and bowed himself.*] By the Description which the Woman gave of him, he concluded it was *Samuel*; and thereupon made his Reverence to him.

Ver. 15. *And Samuel said to Saul, Why hast thou disquieted me, and brought me up?*] This shews it was an evil Spirit, personating *Samuel*, who spake these Words. For it is not in the power of Witches to disturb the Rest of good Men; and to bring them into this World when they please. And *Samuel*, we may be sure, would never have acknowledged such a Power in Magical Arts: The Credit of which the Devil endeavoured to support.

*And Saul answered, I am sore distressed, for the Philistines make war against me, and God is departed from me, and answereth me no more; neither by Prophets, nor by Dreams: therefore I have called thee, that thou mayst make known to me what I shall do.*] Some think he omits Enquiry by *Urim*: Because in truth, he neither did nor could make use of that; *Abiathar* having

carried it away to *David*. But this doth not agree with ver. 6. which supposes he did enquire by *Urim*. He should rather, by Repentance, and Prayer, and Sacrifices, and doing right to *David*, have besought the Favour of God; as *Pellicanus* here well observes.

Ver. 16. *And Samuel said to Saul, Wherefore dost thou ask me, seeing the LORD is departed from thee, and become thine enemy?*] Nothing could be more senseless, than to imagine *Samuel* could do any thing for him, when the LORD, whose Servant *Samuel* was, would not regard him.

Ver. 17. *And the LORD hath done to him.*] That is, to *David*, mentioned in the Conclusion of the Verse.

*As he spake by me.*] Still the evil Spirit personates *Samuel*, that *Saul* might be deceived into a Belief, that it was really he who spoke to him.

*For the LORD hath rent the Kingdom out of thy hand, and given it to thy Neighbour, even unto David.*] As *Samuel* had foretold long ago; and now it was ready to be accomplished.

Ver. 18. *Because thou obeyedst not the Voice of the LORD.*] This relates (*Abarbinel* thinks) to his Sin in *Gilgal*, Chap. xiii.

*Nor executed his fierce wrath upon Amalek.*] This was his next Sin, whereby he highly provoked God's Anger against him: For he was not sensible he had offended his express Command, but justified his Conduct, till *Samuel* took a great deal of pains to convince him; and then told him, he would rend the Kingdom from him, xv. 28.

*Therefore hath the LORD done this unto thee this day.*] He doth not mention his Sin in killing the LORD's Priests; because this Decree of taking the Kingdom from him, was passed before that Sin was committed.

Ver. 19. *Moreover, the LORD will also deliver Israel with thee into the hand of the Philistines.*] *Samuel* himself could no more know this, than an evil Spirit; unless God had been pleased to suggest it: Which he might think good to do to this Ghost, which personated *Samuel*, that he might terrify *Saul*. Or he saw the *Philistines* to be so numerous, and *Saul* so feeble and dispirited, that he doubted not the Victory would be on the *Philistines* side; and therefore confidently pronounced it. But the former is more probable, that God used this evil Spirit to declare his Mind at this time: So that he spake nothing but by his Direction.

*And to-morrow shalt thou and thy Sons be with me.*] If we take the Word *to-morrow* strictly, *Eustathius*, Arch-Bishop of *Antioch*, his Argument against *Origen* is good, that this could not be *Samuel* who spake, because his Words are false: There being more than a Day between this and the Fight, as many have clearly proved from the Story itself. But the Meaning may be no more, than very shortly thou shalt be as I am, that is, dead. For, as many have well observed (particularly *Hackspan* in his Disputation concerning *Angels* and *Demons*) by these Words, *be with me, mors simpliciter notatur, non vero peculiaris mortem secutus status*. Death is simply noted, but not the State which follows after Death.

And



*And the LORD shall deliver the Host of Israel into the hand of the Philistines.]* He would not have him think his Army should be able to defend him. *Abarbinel* observes, that he reckons up three Judgments, in the very Order wherein they fell out (which shews all was spoken by God's Order) *first*, That the Host of *Israel* should be delivered into the hand of the *Philistines*: Then, that *Saul* and his Sons should be slain: And *lastly*, that the *Philistines* should come and dwell in their Cities, xxxi. 7. which he takes to be the Sense of the last Words, which otherwise are only a Repetition of the first.

Ver. 20. *And Saul fell straightway all along on the earth, and was afraid, because of the words of Samuel; and there was no strength in him: for he had eaten no bread all the day, nor all the night.]* No wonder he fainted away, being weak in Body for want of Food: And extremely afflicted in Mind by this dismal Message, which *Samuel*, he thought, brought him from God.

Ver. 21. *And the Woman came unto Saul.]* These Words suggest that *Saul* was in some private Room, where he alone heard the Words that were spoken by the Apparition.

*And saw that he was sore troubled, and said unto him, Behold thy Handmaid hath obeyed thy voice, and I have put my Life in my hand, and have hearkened unto thy words which thou spakest unto me.]* She had exposed herself to extreme Danger: For what we carry in our Hand may easily fall out, or be snatcht from us.

Ver. 22. *Now therefore, I pray thee, hearken thou also unto the voice of thine Handmaid, and let me set a morsel of bread before thee, and eat; that thou mayst have strength when thou goest on thy way.]* For without some Refreshment she saw it would be impossible for him to get to his Camp again.

Ver. 23. *But he refused, and said, I will not.]* He chose rather to die there, than by the *Philistines*.

*But his Servants, together with the Woman, compelled him.]* Pressed him so hard, that he yielded to them.

*And he hearkned to their voice.]* Who knew nothing of what he had heard, but thought he had fainted away only for want of Food.

*So he arose from the earth, and sat upon the bed.]* As the manner (I observed before) then was; and not to lie along when they eat.

Ver. 24. *And the Woman had a fat Calf in the house.]* The Hebrew Word *Marbek* is well translated fat, as *Bochartus* confesses, though it properly signifies (as he demonstrates) a Calf that treads out the Corn, and is fatted up by that means. *Hierozyicon*, P. 1. Lib. 2. Cap. 31.

*And she basted, and killed it, and took flour and kneaded it, and did bake unleavened Bread thereof.]* Because there was no time to let it ferment.

Ver. 25. *And she brought it before Saul, and before his Servants, and they did eat: then they arose up, and went away that night.]* Before the break of Day; that none might discover they had been with such a Woman.

C H A P. XXIX.

Verse 1. **N**OW the *Philistines* gathered all their Army to *Apbek.*] There were three places of this Name; one in the Tribe of *Judah*, another in *Manasseh*, and a third in *Asbur*. Which last seems to be here meant, where the Sons of *Eli* were slain. See iv. 1.

*And the Israelites pitched by a Mountain which is in Jezreel.]* A Valley which was overlook'd by the Mountain *Gilboa*: From whence the *Israelites* came down (xxviii. 4.) to draw up their Army here.

Ver. 2. *And the Lords of the Philistines passed on by hundreds and by thousands.]* When they took a view of their Army, the great Men appeared, some at the Head of an Hundred, some of a Thousand Soldiers.

*But David and his Men passed on in the rearward with Achish.]* Who seems to have been the General of the Army: and to have made *David* and his Men his Life-guard, according to his Resolution, xxviii. 2.

Ver. 3. *Then said the Princes of the Philistines, What do these Hebrews here?] Who, they were afraid, would prove false to them, and take part with their own Countrymen.*

*And Achish said unto the Princes of the Philistines, Is not this David the Servant of Saul, the King of Israel, who hath been with me these days, or these years?] The meaning is, I may say years, not days: For he had been with him part of two Years: And, if he had not formerly known him, his Predecessor had (xxi. 10.) and it is likely he had held Correspondence with him before he came to him.*

*And I have found no fault in him, since he fell unto me, unto this day?] This intimates, that he looked on him as revolted from *Saul*; and by the Experience he had of his Fidelity, he thought he might be still trusted.*

Ver. 4. *And the Princes of the Philistines were wroth with him; and the Princes of the Philistines said unto him,]* In an angry Tone,

*Make this Fellow return, that he may go again to his place, which thou hast appointed him.]* At *Ziglag*, which they were contented he should possess.

*And let him not go down with us to the battel, lest in the battel he be an Adversary to us.]* And thereby do them more mischief than the Army of the *Israelites*.

*For wherewith should he reconcile himself to his Master? should it not be with the heads of these men?] That is, of the Philistines. They reasoned wisely, according to the common Practice of Mankind; and well it was for *David*, that they were such Politicians: For hereby God delivered him out of a very great strait; either of being an Enemy to his Country, or false to his Friends, and to his Trust. And by the same good Providence he was sent back to rescue his Wives, and the Wives and Children of his Men, who were taken captive.*

Ver. 5. *Is not this David of whom they sing one to another in Dances, saying, Saul hath slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands?] They remembered that he was their old Enemy, who*

killed



killed Goliath : And was highly magnified for it, above Saul himself.

Ver. 6. *Then Achish called David, and said unto him, Surely, as the LORD liveth.*] He swears by the God whom David worshipped, that he might be the more believed. Or perhaps he had learn'd something from David of the true God, though he worshipped others with him.

*Thou hast been upright, and thy going out and coming in with me in the Host, is good in my sight.*] He commends him as an unblameable Person in his private Conversation; and as an excellent Commander in his Army.

*For I have not found Evil in thee, since the day of thy coming unto me, unto this day.*] A very honourable Testimony from a Foreign Prince.

*Nevertheless, the Lords favour thee not.*] Unto whom Achish was forced to yield: For he was not an absolute King; but the Lords of the Country still retained a great Authority.

Ver. 7. *Wherefore now return and go in peace: that thou displease not the Lords of the Philistines.*] From the effects of whose Envy and Jealousy he could not preserve him.

Ver. 8. *And David said unto Achish, But what have I done? and what hast thou found in thy Servant so long as I have been with thee unto this day, that I may not go fight against the Enemies of my Lord the King?*] He had told him before, that he found not the least Fault in him: Therefore this Question may seem impertinent. But David was to act his Part handsomely, upon this Occasion; so that, though he was inwardly pleased, he would not have them suspect he was glad to be dismissed: And therefore, since the King was satisfied with his Fidelity, asks why he might not be trusted to fight against his Enemies, and that his Lords would give him a Reason? But Abarbinel thinks he never intended this; but being chosen by Achish to be the Keeper of his Head (xxviii. 2.) he resolved only to discharge this Office; but not to join in the Battle against Israel.

Ver. 9. *And Achish answered and said to David, I know that thou art good in my sight as an Angel of God.*] He had learn'd something, as I observed before, ver. 6. of the Hebrew Religion: And it appears by this, of their Language also. And the Meaning is, he look'd upon David as a Man sent down from Heaven to him: All things prospering that he took in hand.

*Notwithstanding the Princes of the Philistines have said, he shall not go with us to Battle.*] They seem to have made such an Order in Council: Which the King durst not contradict.

Ver. 10. *Wherefore now rise up early in the Morning.*] Lest any Mischief should come to him, if he delayed his Departure.

*With thy Master's Servants that are come with thee.*] This intimates, that the Lords of the Philistines would not trust them, because they looked on them still as Saul's Subjects.

*And as soon as ye are up early in the Morning, and have light, depart.*] He advises them to lose no Time, but as soon as they could see their Way, leave the Army, and march to Ziklag.

Ver. 11. *So David and his Men rose up early in the Morning, to return into the Land of the Philistines.*] For now they were in the Philistines Camp, in the Land of Israel, at Aphek, xxix. 1.

*And the Philistines went up to Jezreel.*] To the Battel to the Israelites, who were pitched there, ver. 1.

## C H A P. XXX.

Verse 1. **A**ND it came to pass, when David and his Men were come to Ziklag on the third Day.] So many Days Journey it was from the Camp of the Philistines to this Place. See the beginning of the next Book, ver. 2.

*That the Amalekites had invaded the South, and Ziklag, and smote Ziklag, and burnt it with Fire.*] To revenge themselves for what David had done to them, xxvii. 8. which they might easily do, when he and his Men were absent; and but a small, if any, Guard left in the Place.

Ver. 2. *And had taken the Women captive that were therein: they slew not any, either great or small; but carried them away, and went on their way.*] Towards their own Country. This may seem strange, that David having killed all he could meet with, and spared none, neither Men nor Women, xxvii. 9, 11. they should not serve his People in the same kind. But though they sought Revenge, yet they desired Booty much more: Being a poor, and very covetous People; who intended to sell them for Slaves, and make Money of them.

Ver. 3. *And David and his Men came to the City, and behold it was burnt with Fire: and their Wives, and their Sons, and their Daughters were taken captive.*] This befel David when he seemed to be in the greatest Security: Having escaped the Fury of Saul, and also the Service of the Philistines; who were likely to make Saul pay very dear for his ill Usage of David. But such is the State of this World, we are oft surprized with sadder unexpected Troubles; and, as the Proverb is, many Things fall out between the Cup and the Lip.

Ver. 4. *And David and the People that were with him lift up their Voice and wept: until they had no power to weep.*] For such Calamities are enough to break the Heart of the most courageous and undaunted Spirits.

Ver. 5. *And David's two Wives were taken captive, Abinoam the Jezreelite, and Abigail the Wife of Nabal the Carmelite.*] This is set down distinctly, to aggravate David's Loss.

Ver. 6. *And David was greatly distressed, for the People spake of stoning him.*] As the Cause of this Calamity, in leaving the City unguarded; or in provoking the Amalekites so grievously as he had done, in the Slaughter of all he could find.

*Because the Soul of the People was grieved; every Man for his Sons, and for his Daughters.*] Grief took away the use of their Reason.

*But David encouraged himself in the LORD his God.*] Who had never failed him in the greatest Distresses: But done great things for him, and promised to do greater.

Ver. 7. *And David said to Abiathar the Priest, Abimelech's Son, Bring me hither, I pray thee, the Ephod.*] From these Words Petrus Cunaus, (Lib. 1. de Rep. Heb. Cap. 14.) concludes that the Kings of Israel might make use of the Ephod, as well as the High-Priest: Because David

saith,



faith, *bring me hither, &c.* But this doth not signify that he himself meant to use it; but only that he desired it might be used for him: According to what is said of *Josua*, in *Numb.* xxvii. 21. that he should stand before *Eleazar* the Priest, *who should enquire for him, &c.*

*And Abiathar brought thither the Ephod unto David.]* From these Words the same *Cunæus*, in an Epistle of his to *Caspar Barlaeus* (*Epist. Ecclesiasticae*, 506. p. 767.) argues for his fore-named Opinion, because it is not said he brought it *le David*, but *el David*: The former of which, he thinks, might have signified for his Use; but this denotes, it was for him to use himself. Which he endeavours to confirm from the high Privilege which the King had above other Men, of sitting in the House of God, &c. But this is confuted lately by a Man very learned in these Matters, (*John Braunius*, *Lib. 2. de Vest. Hebr. Sacerd.* Cap. 20. n. 32.) who well observes (as *Buxtorf* also doth) that in the foregoing Words *David* doth say, bring the Ephod, *li*, i. e. *pro me*, or *mea causa*, for me, or in *meam gratiam*, for my sake.

Ver. 8. *And David enquired at the LORD, saying, Shall I pursue after this Troop?* He enquired by *Abiathar*. So all the Hebrew Doctors, as *Buxtorf* observes in his *Hist. Urim*, Cap. 3.

*Shall I overtake them?* This shews it is a vain Observation of the Jews, that they were not to ask two Questions together: For *David* still continues to do so here, as he had done at *Keilah*; though God, they say there, had set him right in his Enquiry, and taught him to do otherwise.

*And he answered him, Pursue; for thou shalt surely overtake them, and without fail recover all.]* He answers both Questions at once, and tells him also more than he ask'd; that he should regain all that he had lost: Which no doubt was a mighty Encouragement unto him in his Pursuit.

Ver. 9. *So David went, he and the six hundred Men that were with him, and came to the Brook Besor; where those that were left behind, stayed.]* They that were left to look after the Stuff (*ver. 24.*) who were so tired, that they were not able to march any farther.

Ver. 10. *So David pursued, he and four hundred Men: for two hundred abode behind, who were so faint, that they could not go over the Brook Besor.]* Grief, it is likely, made them neglect to take necessary Refreshment, before they came out.

Ver. 11. *And they found an Egyptian in the Field.]* They knew him to be so by his Habit: Or perhaps they did not know whence he was, till he came to himself, and told them. But finding him in the Garb of a Soldier, they thought he belonged to the *Amalekites*.

*And brought him to David.]* Half dead.

*And they gave him Bread, and he did eat, and made him drink Water.]* Natural Compassion might move them to this: But they had another Motive, which was the Hope of making some Discovery, by his means, where the Enemies were.

Ver. 12. *And they gave him a piece of a Cake of Figs, and two Clusters of Raisins.]* Did all they could to comfort him up, and revive his Spirits.

*And when he had eaten, his Spirit came again to him: For he had eaten no Bread, nor drunk any Water, three days and three nights.]* Having no body near him to look after him: And being so sick, he could not look after himself. This is to be understood as *Matth.* xii. 40. of one whole Day, and part of two others: As appears from the next Verse, where he saith, *three Days ago I fell sick.* In the Hebrew, *I fell sick this third Day*, i. e. this is the third Day since I fell sick.

Ver. 13. *And David said, To whom belondest thou, and whence art thou? And he said, I am a young Man of Egypt, Servant to an Amalekite: and my Master left me, because three Days ago I fell sick.]* A barbarous Act, to leave him there to perish; when they had Camels good Store, for the Carriage of Men, as well as of their Spoil, *ver. 17.* But this Inhumanity cost them dear: For by this means they lost their own Lives. Such is the wonderful Providence of God (as *Conr. Pellicanus* here piously observes) which governs all the Desires, and Thoughts, and Counsels, and Works, and whatsoever is done among Men; both the good and the bad.

Ver. 14. *And we made an Invasion upon the South of the Cherethites,]* They are the same with the *Philistines*. For the *Arabians* call their Country (as *Bochartus* observes) *Keritha*, and the *Syrians* call it *Creth*. Whose Inhabitants the *Hebrews* call *Crethi* or *Crethim*. And to put all out of doubt, *the South of the Cherethites* here mentioned, is in the *sixth* Verse explained, *the Land of the Philistines*. Who were excellent Archers, as we may gather from *xxxi. 3.* See there.

*And upon the Coast that belongeth to Judah.]* The South Coast of that Tribe.

*And upon the Land of Caleb;]* We read no where else of this Land: which, in all probability, signifies that South part of *Judah* which was given to *Caleb*, and which his Posterity inherited, *Josh.* xiv. 13.

*And we burnt Ziklag with Fire.]* With which they seem to have ended their Expedition.

Ver. 15. *And David said, Canst thou bring me down to this Company? And he said, Swear unto me by the LORD, that thou wilt neither kill me, nor deliver me into the hand of my Master,]* Who, it is likely, had otherwise been cruel to him: And therefore he had no mind to serve him any longer. Besides his Service, I suppose, was no better than Slavery.

*And I will bring thee down to this Company.]* For he heard them say, it is likely, where they would stay and rest themselves.

Ver. 16. *And when he had brought him down,]* Who had given him Security, no doubt, by his Oath, as he desired: And that, as I observed before, was such a sacred thing in ancient times, that all Men relied upon it.

*Behold, they were spread abroad upon the Earth, eating and drinking, and dancing: because of the great Spoil they had taken out of the Land of the Philistines, and out of the Land of Judah.]* They had laid aside their Arms, and were feasting and making merry; as Men are wont to do, when they have had great Success in their Enterprizes.

Ver. 27. *And David smote them from the Twilight, even unto the Evening of the next Day.]* He came



came upon them in the Evening, when they were refreshing and resting themselves with Mirth and Jollity: Being secure that no Danger was near them; because the *Israelites* and the *Philistines* (among whom they thought *David* was) were ready to engage; so that he could no more come to revenge himself, than the *Philistines* could for the Injuries done to them. And it is probable *David* let them fall asleep, when they had eaten and drunk liberally; and at Peep of Day fell upon them, and hunted them until the Evening; which begun the next Day.

*And there escaped not a Man of them, save four hundred young Men that rode upon Camels,]* The Country of *Arabia*, where this People lived, abounded with Camels: One sort of which run very swiftly. They were used also by some Nations in Battel: As *Vegetius* observes, *Lib. 3. de Re Militari, Cap. 23.* See *Stewechius's* Annotations on him.

Ver. 18. *And recovered all that the Amalekites had carried away: and David rescued his two Wives,]* Which are here particularly mentioned, because he had the greatest concern for them.

Ver. 19. *And there was nothing lacking to them, either small or great, neither Son nor Daughter, neither Spoil, nor anything they had taken to them,]* According to the Word of God, ver. 6.

Ver. 20. *And David took all the Flocks and the Herds,]* Which had been taken by the *Amalekites* from the *Philistines*, and other Places.

*Which he drove before those other Cattle,]* His Soldiers drove them before those Cattle that had been taken from *David* and his Men.

*And said, This is David's Spoil,]* Not that he challenged it all to himself: But that it was acquired by his Valour and Conduct; which they now magnified, who lately spake of stoning him. For some think they sung a triumphant Song, and that this was the Burden of it: Which they repeated at the end of every Verse.

Ver. 21. *And David came to the two hundred Men, which were so faint that they could not follow David: whom he had made also to abide at the Brook Besor,]* That they might look after their Stuff.

*And they went forth to meet David, and to meet the People that were with him,]* To congratulate their happy Success: And to receive their Wives and Children, who had been carried captive.

*And when David came unto the People, he saluted them,]* He was glad to see them, and enquired how they did (as it is in the Margin) for he had left them very weak.

Ver. 22. *Then answered all the wicked Men, and Men of Belial of those that went with David, and said,]* It is likely *David* told these two hundred Men, when he saluted them, that they should lose nothing, by their not being able to go along with him: Which made these Men, who had no Conscience, but were only greedy of Prey, to say what follows.

*Because they went not with us, we will not give them ought of the spoil which we have recovered; save to every Man his Wife and his Children, that he may lead them away, and depart,]* This was a

savage Resolution of such as feared not God, nor regarded Men: Since it was not the Choice of their Brethren to stay behind, but meer Necessity, and Inability to travel further.

Ver. 23. *Then said David,]* Who still preserved his Authority over the most wicked among them.

*Ye shall not do so, my Brethren,]* He overrules them: But thought fit to do it in a friendly manner.

*With that which God hath given us, who hath preserved us, and delivered the Company that came against us, into our hand,]* As much as to say, when God hath been so good to us, we ought not to be unkind to our Brethren.

Ver. 24. *For who will hearken unto you in this matter?]* No equal Persons, he was confident, would be of their Opinion, if the Matter was referred to them.

*But as his part is that goeth down to the Battel, so shall his part be that tarrieth by the Stuff: their parts shall be alike,]* *Polybius* explains the Order of dividing the Spoils of War (as *Grotius* observes, *Lib. 3. de Jure Belli & Pacis, Cap. 6. Sect. 17.*) some of which was allotted those who remained in the Camp. But the Proportions were various in several Places. In some, a simple Portion was given to a Footman; a double to a Centurion; and a treble to a Horseman. In other Places they varied from this: But howsoever the Division was made, the Commander in Chief was allowed to take the best of the Spoil to himself. As *David* perhaps now did: And then left the rest to be equally divided among his Men. But the *Talmudists* say, that in After-Times, the King had all the royal Furniture that was found in the Tent of the conquered Prince, given unto him for his Share.

Ver. 25. *And it was so from that day forward, that he made it a Statute and an Ordinance for Israel, unto this day,]* The Equity of this Law appears from hence; that by common Consent these two hundred Men were left behind, to look after their Baggage: And they were part of the same Body of Men, linked together in the same common Society: And were hindered by meer Weariness from going to fight, which otherways they would have done. And their Will was accepted for the Deed. And they were in the same common Danger; for if the four hundred had been routed, their Enemies would soon have cut them off.

This Law may seem to have been ordained before by God himself in *Numbers xxxi.* Which if it were, it may be thought strange that *David* should not alledge that Law, to quiet the present Contention. But it is evident, this was a very different Case from that: For threescore thousand who staid at home, had no more among them, than the twelve thousand had who went to the Battle, ver. 27. of that Chapter. And what was then done was not ordained to be observed as a Statute through all Generations. This therefore was a new Law, but perpetually continued to the Time of the *Maccabees*; as appears from the second Book of their History, chap. viii. ver. 28, 30. And *Ossander* observes, that it pleased the *Romans* to do the same, as *Festus* tells us. See *Josb. xxii. 8.*

But



But the most ancient Custom among the Romans was (as *Godefridus Steuermann* shews at large, upon *Vegetius de Re Militari*, Lib. 2. Cap. 7.) to burn part of the Spoils, as an Offering to their Gods; and for the rest, sometimes the Soldiers were permitted to keep what every Man had got, to himself: And sometimes, if the Necessities of the Commonwealth required, they were all brought to the *Quæstor*, to be put into the Publick Treasury. Out of those which every Man kept to himself, they were wont, when they came home, to have some of them upon the Posts of the Gates to their Houses: Which it was lawful to remove, when an House was sold to another Man.

Ver. 26. *And when David came to Ziklag, he sent of the Spoil to the Elders of Judah, even to his Friends.]* By this seems plain, that he had reserved some Part of the Spoil to himself; out of which he made Presents to his Friends: Some of which were of the best Quality in the Tribe of Judah.

*Saying, Behold, a Present for you of the Spoil of the Enemies of the LORD.]* In the Hebrew, a Blessing for you, &c. So he calls the Present, because it was a Token that he wished all Prosperity to them; who had been kind to him in his Banishment, and help'd to maintain and protect him: And whom he was desirous still to oblige; that they might more readily receive him, when he had a Right to take Possession of the Kingdom.

Ver. 27. *And to them which were in Bethel.]* This seems to be the same Place, with that which is called *Baalath* and *Kirjath-baal*, *Josh. xv. 9, 60.*

*And to them which were in South-Ramoth.]* A Place in the Tribe of Simeon, *Josh. xix. 8:* called *Ramoth in the South*, to distinguish it from *Ramoth-Gilead*, which lay Northward. By which it appears he had other Friends, who sometimes gave him Shelter, or Subsistence, besides those in his own Tribe.

*And to them which were in Fattir.]* A Town in the Mountainous Part of the Tribe of Judah, *Josh. xv. 48.*

Ver. 28. *And to them that were in Aroer, &c.]* Not that on the other side *Jordan* (mentioned in *Numb. xxxii.*) but some other Place, in the Tribe of Judah, or some neighbouring Tribe, where the other Places here mentioned were: For we no where read, that *David* ever fled, during *Saul's* Persecution, into the Country beyond *Jordan*.

Ver. 29. *And to them which were in Rachal, and to them which were in the Cities of the Jerahmeelites.]* These People lay on the South of Judah, *xxvii. 10.* where it is likely, *Rachal* also was.

*And to them that were in the Cities of the Kenites.]* Who were near to the *Jerahmeelites*; it appears from the forenamed Place.

Ver. 30. *And to those that were in Hormah.]* This was a City in the Tribe of Judah, *Josh. xv. 30.* afterwards given unto the Tribe of Simeon, *Josh. xix. 4.*

*And to them that were in Chor-asban, and to them that were in Athach.]* It is probable that these two Places were also in the same Tribe.

Ver. 31. *And to them which were in Hebron.]*

Which was certainly a City of Judah, *Josh. xv. 54.* Where *David* was first made King, and reigned over that Tribe, *2 Sam. ii. 1, 2, &c.*

*And to all the Places where David and his Men were wont to haunt.]* Either to lurk among them, or to get Provisions, or Intelligence from them.

## C H A P. XXXI.

Ver. 1. **A**ND the Philistines fought against Israel.] i. e. Gave them Battel: And as they began the Quærel (*xxix. 1.*) so they seem to have begun the Fight.

*And the Men of Israel fled from before the Philistines, and fell down slain in Mount Gilboa.]* They fled thither from the Valley of *Jezreel*, and were there slain in great numbers.

Ver. 2. *And the Philistines followed hard upon Saul, and upon his Sons.]* Who were the Leaders of the Army: Which the *Philistines* thought would never rally again, if they were slain or taken.

*And the Philistines slew Jonathan, and Abinadab, and Malchishua, Saul's Sons.]* It seems *Ishbosheth* was not there, being no warlike Man; or he escaped out of the Battel by flight, as *Abner* and other great Men did: Or perhaps he was left at home to manage domestick Affairs. *Jonathan* seems to have deserved a better Fate: But the Providence of God suffered him to be slain, that *David* might more easily come to the Throne: For though he had freely consented to it, yet he was such a Favourite of the People, that many of them might have stickled for him.

Ver. 3. *And the Battel went sore against Saul.]* They pursued him so close, that there was no Hope he could escape.

*And the Archers hit him, and he was sorely wounded of the Archers.]* In the Hebrew the words are, the Archers found him: Which signifies in that Language, to rush upon one on a sudden. Bows and Arrows were the principal Weapons of this Nation, in the Use of which they were very dexterous, and did terrible Execution. Which is the Reason, some think, that *David* when he came to the Throne, taught the *Israelites* the Use of the Bow (as we read in the next Book, Chap. i. ver. 18.) that they might not be inferior to the *Philistines*, nor fall into the like Disaster that *Saul* had done. And when he had made Peace with the *Philistines*, he took some of their Archers, with whom he was well acquainted, to be the Keepers of his Body: Which are those so often mentioned in the following Books under the Name of *Cerethites*, *2 Sam. viii. 18. xv. 18. xx. 7. 1 Kings i. 38, 44. 1 Chron. xviii. 17.* in all which Places where the Hebrew hath the word *Cerethi*, the Chaldee Paraphrast interprets it *Archers*. See *Bochartus* in his *Canaan*, Lib. 1. Cap. 15. p. 459.

Ver. 4. *Then said Saul unto his Armour-bearer, draw thy Sword, and thrust me through therewith.]* For tho' he had received many Wounds, yet they were not mortal; at least, not for the present.



*Lest these uncircumcised come, and thrust me through, and abuse me.]* He was afraid they might put him to some ignominious Death, or make sport with him, as they did with Samson.

*But his Armour-bearer would not, for he was sore afraid.]* Dreaded to think of killing his King.

*Therefore Saul took a Sword, and fell upon it.]* And killed himself, as appears by the next Words.

Ver. 5. *And when his Armour-bearer saw that Saul was dead, he fell likewise upon his Sword, and died with him.]* Some of the Jews think this was Doeg.

Ver. 6. *So Saul died, and his three Sons, and his Armour-bearer, and all his Men, the same day together.]* That is, all the Men that attended upon his Person.

Ver. 7. *And when the Men of Israel that were on the other side of the Valley.]* Of Jezreel.

*And they that were on the other side Jordan.]* Or rather, on this side Jordan: For the Hebrew Word signifies either side. And there was no Occasion for those beyond Jordan to flee.

*Saw that the Men of Israel fled, and that Saul and his Sons were dead, they forsook the Cities and fled.]* Being afraid, I suppose, to be carried Captive.

*And the Philistines came and dwelt in them.]* The Consternation being so great, that there were none to oppose them.

Ver. 8. *And it came to pass on the morrow, when the Philistines came to strip the Slain, that they found Saul and his three Sons fallen in Mount Gilboa.]* It was contrary to Military Discipline, presently to fall upon the Spoil: Which they did not till the next day.

*And they cut off his Head.]* As David had done the Head of Goliath.

*And stript off his Armour, and sent into the Land of the Philistines round about.]* They sent the News of this great Victory; and perhaps his Head and Armour in token of it.

*To publish it in the House of their Idols, and among the People.]* That they might give thanks to their Gods, for the Victory they had obtained.

Ver. 10. *And they put his Armour in the House of Ashtaroth.]* As the Sword of Goliath was laid up in the Tabernacle.

*And they fastned his Body to the Wall of Bethshan.]* To expose it, as we do the Bodies of great Malefactors, to publick Shame and Reproach. And thus it appears by ver. 12. they did with the Bodies of his Sons.

Ver. 11. *And when the Inhabitants of Jabesh-Gilead heard of that which the Philistines had done to Saul.]* They lived on the other side Jordan: For the People on this side were fled.

Ver. 12. *All the valiant Men arose, and went all night.]* To avoid Discovery.

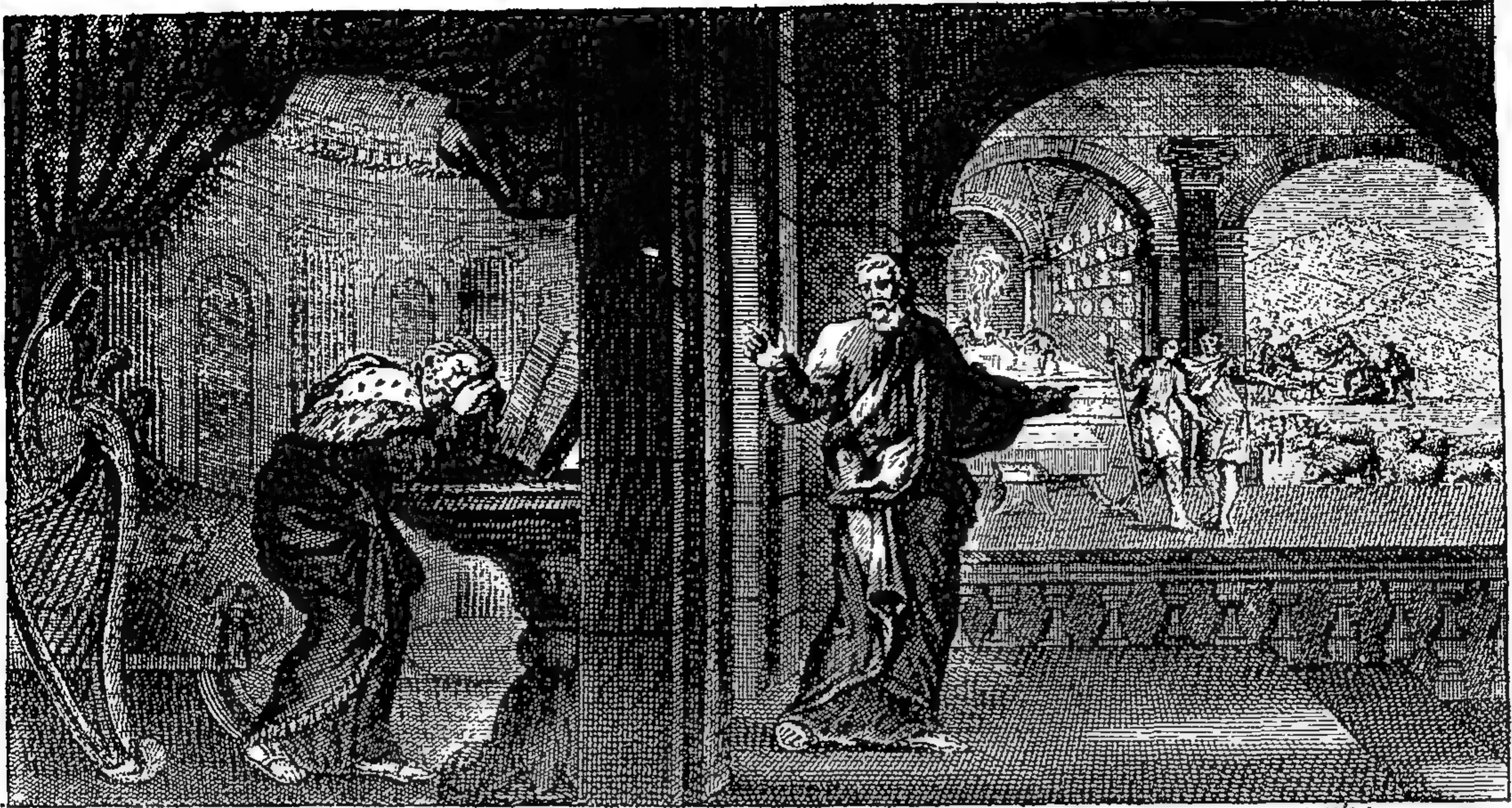
*And took the Body of Saul and the Bodies of his Sons from the Wall of Bethshan.]* Which was a City in the Tribe of Manasseh, not far from Jordan, and the Sea of Genesaret: Out of which the Manassites could not expel the old Inhabitants, Judges i. 27. To this Place they of Jabesh might march in a Night's Time, and accomplish their Design. Aristotle reports in the fifth Book of his *Ethicks* (as Strigelius here observes) that the Temples of the Graces were built in the very midst of the Cities of the Greeks, that all Men might be admonished to be grateful. Of which Virtue the Men of Jabesh-Gilead gave a most Noble Example: Who being delivered by Saul, in the beginning of his Reign, from the Ammonites, when they were in danger to lose their Eyes (Chap. xi.) now repay his Care of them when he was dead, by not suffering his Carcase to want the Honour of Burial.

*And came to Jabesh, and burnt them there.]* Some think they burnt their Flesh, which was rotten and putrid: Others, that they poured upon their Flesh Aromatick hot Spices, such as Joseph ordered for the embalming of his Father: Or, as the Targum understands it, *they burnt upon, or over them.* Where Kimchi notes, that the Paraphrast had respect to the Custom delivered down from their Ancestors, of burning the Beds and other Utensils of the Dead upon their Graves; or to the burning of Spices. Certain it is, there was no such Custom as this among the Jews, of burning the Bodies of the Dead. Though some think that these People imitated the Heathenish Custom, affecting Singularity, as appears from the Story of the Benjamites, Judges xxi. 8. where we read, they alone would not come into the Assembly of the whole Nation. Such a Singularity Gierusthinks they were now guilty of: And therefore in a parallel Place to this, 1 Chron. x. 11. there is no mention made of this burning: Either because it was an unwonted Practice, or unworthy to be remembred.

Ver. 13. *And they took their Bodies, and buried them under a Tree in Jabesh.]* In this also there seems to be some of the Superstition of the Gentiles; among whom Trees were accounted sacred Things.

*And fasted seven days.]* Expressed great Sorrow; of which this was a Token. Lucian saith in his Book *De Lustu*, that the Greeks were wont in their Funerals neither to eat nor drink for three Days. But this is not to be so understood; but that they fasted for seven Days together till the Evening (as the manner of fasting was among the Jews) and eat nothing all day.





*M. J. G. Gucke Sculp.*

# A COMMENTARY UPON THE SECOND BOOK OF SAMUEL.

## CHAP. I.

Ver. 1. NOW it came to pass after the Death of Saul, when David was returned from the Slaughter of the Amalekites.] The Fight between Saul and the Philistines fell out, when

David was in pursuit of the Amalekites.

And David had abode about two days in Ziklag.] Which it seems the Amalekites had not quite burnt; contenting themselves with the Spoil.

Ver. 2. And it came to pass on the third day.] After his coming into Ziklag.

That behold a Man came out of the Camp from Saul, with his Clothes rent, and Earth upon his Head.] As the manner of deep Mourners was. See 1 Sam. iv. 4.

And so it was, when he came to David, that he fell on the Earth, and did Obedience.] Honoured him as his King.

Ver. 3. And David said, From whence comest thou? and he said, Out of the Camp of Israel am I escaped.] Some of the Jews have a Conceit,

that this was Doeg's Son: Of which, tho' there be no Proof, yet the Objection against it is of no Value. For Doeg was an Edomite, and this Person an Amalekite, which seems inconsistent with his being the Son of Doeg. But it is to be considered that all Amalekites were also Edomites: Tho' all Edomites were not Amalekites. For Amalek was Esau's Grandson by his Son Eliphaz, Gen. xxxvi. 15, 16.

Ver. 4. And David said, How went the matter? I pray thee tell me. And he answered, that the People were fled from the Battel; and many of the People are also fallen and dead; and Saul and Jonathan his Son are dead also.] He relates the Matter very orderly; that first the Israelites were routed and fled; and then in the Pursuit of them many were slain; and in conclusion, Saul and Jonathan his Son. Which two he only mentions; thinking that David was principally concerned in them.

Ver. 5. And David said unto the young Man that told him, How knowest thou that Saul and Jonathan are dead?] He might easily know that



the *Israelites* were beaten ; but not so easily that these were in the number of the Slain.

Ver. 6. *And the young Man that told him, said, As I happened by chance upon Mount Gilboa.*] One would think by this, that he was not a Soldier, but a Countryman, who had occasion to go that way.

*Behold, Saul leaned upon his Spear.*] Endeavouring to run it through his Body.

*And lo, the Chariots and Horsemen followed hard after him.*] So that he feared he should fall into their hands, before he could dispatch himself.

Ver. 7. *And when he looked behind him, he saw me, and called unto me ; and I answered, Here am I.*] He looked round about him, to see if there were any near him of his Servants.

Ver. 8. *And he said unto me, Who art thou ? and I answered, I am an Amalekite.*] He did not dissemble his Country, tho' he knew Saul had no reason to be a Friend to it.

Ver. 9. *And he said unto me again, Stand I pray thee upon me, and slay me.*] He would have him lean so hard upon him, with the whole Weight of his Body, that the Spear might run through him ; which he had not Strength to make it do. This is not a likely Story : For Saul, in all Probability, would have been as unwilling to be killed by an *Amalekite*, as by a *Philistine*.

*For Anguish is come upon me.*] The Hebrew word *Schabatz* is variously translated. By some *trembling* ; by others, *Convulsions* ; by the LXX, *σύνεσις*, *Darkness*. *Kimchi* saith it was a Disease, which some say was the *Cramp* : But in Scripture, as *Braunius* observes (Lib. 1. de *Vestitu Sacerd. Hebr.* Cap. 17. Sect. 9.) it never signifies any one of these Things, but some Ornament in a Garment. And therefore our marginal Translation is better, *my embroidered Coat* hinders the Spear from going far into my Body : Or his *Coat of Mail*, as *Diodate* translates it. For it consisted of little Rings one within another, which made it hard to penetrate. And thus *Rabagam* among the *Jews* understands it.

*Because my Life is yet whole within me.*] He was not mortally wounded.

Ver. 10. *So I stood upon him and slew him, because I was sure he could not live, after he was fallen.*] This is contrary to what Saul said just before, that *his Life was whole within him* (unless he meant that the *Philistines* would instantly come upon him and kill him) and it was as false that he slew him ; for it appears by the foregoing Relation, that Saul killed himself : And that not with a Spear, but with his Sword, xxxi. 4. But this the young Man said to excuse himself, if David did not approve the Fact.

*And I took the Crown that was on his Head, and the Bracelets that were on his Arms ; and have brought them hither unto my Lord.*] Saul was the first that had the Ensigns of Royal Authority ; for the Judges had none : But were mere Ministers of God (during his Pleasure) who was their King and Governour. And it is not likely that Saul wore his Crown when he was in the Fight (for that had been to set out himself a Mark for the *Philistines* to shoot at) but it was carried along with him into the

Field, by some that attended him ; to be ready to put on, if he had gotten the Victory, and triumphed. The *Jews* think that *Doeg* his Armour-bearer had it in his Custody : Who before he killed himself gave it to his Son (this young *Amalekite*) and bade him carry it to *David* : Hoping he might thereby ingratiate himself with him.

Ver. 11. *And David took hold of his Clothes and rent them ; and likewise all the Men that were with him.*] That is, all his Attendants. Every one knows that this was a Token of very great Sorrow, and of a violent Passion : Which all Nations used, as we learn from *Homer*, *Herodotus*, *Virgil*, and other ancient Authors.

Ver. 12. *And they mourned and wept.*] The whole Company made great Lamentations, and shed many Tears.

*And fasted until Even.*] Till the Evening Sacrifice was offered : Tho' *Buxtorf* (in his *Synag. Judaica*) thinks they abstained from all Meat and Drink, till the Stars appeared.

*For Saul, and for Jonathan his Son, and for the People of the LORD, and for the House of Israel ; because they were fallen by the Sword.*] He had great reason to mourn for *Jonathan*, who was his great Friend ; but some think he should have rejoiced to hear of *Saul's* Death, who was his bitter Enemy. But there were many Reasons for his bewailing his Death, as a publick Person, who was lately reconciled to him ; and might possibly have returned to a better Mind, if he had lived longer. However, the Manner of his Death very much affected him ; and the more, because he heard perhaps of his being just before to consult a Witch, and gave no Tokens of his Repentance. The *Jews* say, in both the *Talmuds*, that he mourned for *Saul*, as the *Prince of the great Sanhedrim* ; and for *Jonathan*, as the *Father of it*. See *Selden*, Lib. 2. de *Synedr.* Cap. 16. Sect. 4.

Ver. 13. *And David said unto the young Man that told him, Whence art thou ? and he said, I am the Son of a Stranger ; an Amalekite.* He had told David once before who he was, in the Relation he made of his Discourse with *Saul*, ver. 8. But being astonished at the News, he did not attend unto that Circumstance, or had forgot it. Besides, a good Judge ought to examine Things strictly, and not to trust unto the first Answer.

Ver. 14. *And David said, How wast thou not afraid to stretch forth thy hand, to destroy the LORD's Anointed ?*] Who, it is possible, might have recovered, and been carried off by some of his own Men : The *Philistines*, by some extraordinary Providence of God, being diverted from their Pursuit. And it was the greater Presumption of this young Man to do it ; since one of *Saul's* own Servants durst not venture upon such a Fact.

Ver. 15. *And David called one of the young Men.*] One of the Guards of his Body.

*And said unto him, Go near and fall upon him. And he smote him, that he died.*] There was a known Law, that no Man should be condemned out of the Mouth of one Witness : And the *Jews* tell us, that no Judge was to sit alone, but to have some other joined



joined with him: And that no Man's Testimony was to be taken against himself. But this was the singular Prerogative of their Kings, that they might alone hear any Man's Cause, and condemn him; and that out of the Mouth of one Witness, or from his own Confession. Of which *Maimonides* gives this Case of the *Amalekite* as an Instance: Which he looks upon as an extraordinary Example, and as the King's Process. See *Schickhard, de Jure Regis*, Cap. 4. Theorem 14. and my Notes upon *Josh. vii. 25.* But after all, it looks something hard, that a Man should be put to death for doing what *Saul* himself desired, and when he was sure (if this Man said true) that he could not live. *Abarbinel* therefore thinks, that this Man being an *Amalekite*, *David* supposed he might kill *Saul* out of Revenge, for the Slaughter he had made of his People.

Ver. 16. *And David said unto him, Thy Blood be upon thy Head: for thy Mouth hath testified against thee, saying, I have slain the LORD's Anointed.*] That is, thou art the Cause of thine own Death; or the Blood thou hast shed, is the Reason of thy Death.

Ver. 17. *And David lamented with this Lamentation over Saul, and over Jonathan his Son.*] He and his Servants had lamented them before, ver. 12. but now *David* composed a Song for a publick and universal Lamentation.

Ver. 18. *Also he had them teach the Children of Judah.*] Among whom he now was; and over whom he first reigned. This comes in as a *Parentthesis* between the former Verse and what follows; to shew his early Endeavours to promote the Good of the People.

*The use of the Bow.*] While he made Lamentation for the Dead, he did not neglect the Care of the Living: That they might be provided with better Means to defend themselves. For they now looking upon him, as the King God designed should rule over them, he ordered they should immediately learn the Skill of using Bows and Arrows, in which the *Philistines* excelled them. See what I have noted, 1 *Sam. xxxi. 3.* Some indeed make this the Title of the following Song, which they were to sing among their military Exercises: But the former seems a more natural Interpretation; which *Conradus Pellicanus* proposed in the Beginning of the Reformation. The *Jews*, saith he, hitherto used only Slings and Swords; but now were taught to shoot with Bows and Arrows: For it did not misbecome them to learn the Art of defending themselves from Infidels. And indeed the Benefit of having good Archers in an Army is so great, that *Cato* took the pains to describe it in his Book of *Military Discipline*, as *Vegetius* tells us. Who says, that *Scipio* hoped for no Success in *Africa* against the *Numantines*, nisi in omnibus centuriis lectos sagittarios miscuisset, unless he had mingled some choice Archers with every Company of Soldiers, commanded by a *Centurion*, Lib. 1. Cap. 15. And as this was done among the Footmen, so in the next Book he makes it the Qualification of a Captain of Horse, sagittas doctissime mittere, to shoot Arrows most skillfully, Lib. 2. Cap. 14.

*Behold, it is written in the Book of Jasher,*] That is, this Order for teaching the Children of *Judah* the Use of the Bow; was more largely recorded there. But what Book this was, is very uncertain: Yet *Victorinus Strigelius* adventures to say, *Haud dubie fuit Historia Ecclesiastica, qualis nunc est Eusebiana, aut Theodoretica:* Without doubt it was an Ecclesiastical History, like that which we have now of *Eusebius*, or *Theodoret*. See my Notes upon *Josh. x. 13.* I should rather say, that *Jasher* signifying right, it was a Book concerning the right Art of making War: Upon which Subject the ancient *Romans* wrote many Books; particularly *Cato*, *Cornelius Celsus*, *Frontinus* and *Patermus*; which were abridged, as he himself tells us, by *Vegetius de Re Militari*, Lib. 1. Cap. 8. *Procopius Gazæus* thinks these Words declare, *Hanc historiam ex multis libris collectam esse*; that this History was gathered out of many prophetic Books.

Ver. 19. *The Beauty of Israel is slain upon thy high places.*] The Flower of the Nation; their choice young Men: Together with *Saul* and his Sons.

*How are the Mighty fallen!*] What a Slaughter is made among the valiant Men!

Ver. 20. *Tell it not in Gath, publish it not in the Streets of Askelon.*] The City *Gath* seems to have been the Metropolis of the *Philistines* Country; and *Askelon* next to it. Where it was in vain to wish this might not be published: For it was done already. Therefore these are only Expressions of great Sadness and Sorrow, that this Overthrow should be published; which he could not but wish had never been heard of.

*Lest the Daughters of the Philistines rejoice, lest the Daughters of the Uncircumcised triumph.*] According to the manner of those Countries; where the Women celebrated with Songs and Dances, the Victory of the Men over their Enemies. See *Exod. xv. 1, &c. Judges xi. 34.*

Ver. 21. *Ye Mountains of Gilboa, let there be no Dew, neither let there be Rain upon you, nor Fields of Offerings.*] Fruitful Fields, from whence Offerings might be brought to the House of God. These are Poetical Expressions, from the common Language of Mankind: Who are wont to speak with abhorrence of those Places, and to curse them, where any Calamity hath befallen their Friends.

*There the Shield of the Mighty is vilely cast away.*] They were forced to throw away their Shields, that they might run the faster away; which was a great Disgrace to them.

*The Shield of Saul, as tho' he had not been anointed with Oil.*] As if he had been a common Soldier. So these Words are generally interpreted as spoken of *Saul*. But the Words, as though he had, are not in the *Hebrew*; where there is only, not anointed with Oil: Which may as well relate to the Shield, as the *Jews* interpret it, and thus explain it. By the holy Oil, Men were set apart for some great Office; as that of Priests, and sometimes Kings. Now when any Person, in a sudden Danger of the State, was chosen to be Captain-General of their Army, they were wont to anoint him: That by this Sight he might be animated to fight the LORD's Battels courageously. And such a Person was called,



called, *The Anointed of War*: Nay, sometimes (they say) their Armour was anointed, to increase their Confidence; just as the Vessels of the Tabernacle were, which the Priests used: Unto which they think *David* alludes in these Words. See *Guil. Schichardus*, Cap. 1. *Theorem* 4. of his *Jus Regium*: Where *Carpzovius* observes, that these Words *Isaiab* xxi. 9. favour this Interpretation: And is alledged by *Rasi* and *Ralbag*, as parallel to this Place. But he confesses he can find no where, that their Shields, or other warlike Instruments were anointed with holy Oil, to make them fight with greater Boldness.

Ver. 22. *From the Blood of the slain, from the Fat of the mighty, the Bow of Jonathan turned not back.*] By this it appears, that *Jonathan* was a very skilful Archer (as perhaps some other great Men were) though the common People were not trained up to the Use of the Bow: Which *Jonathan* so well managed, that as he always hit his Mark, so his Arrows pierced into the very Entrails of the most mighty Men.

*And the Sword of Saul returned not empty.*] Always did great Execution (as we now speak) upon those whom he fought withal.

Ver. 23. *Saul and Jonathan were lovely and pleasant in their Lives.*] Courteous and kind to their People: Which is a great Virtue in Princes. To *David* indeed *Saul* expressed a great deal of Ill-nature: But that proceeded from *Saul's* Jealousy, and Fear that he would supplant his Family, and place himself in the Throne. And this highly advances the Glory of *David*, that he commends his greatest Enemy for what was praise-worthy in him: As *Cæsar*, they say, could not but shed some Tears when *Pompey's* Head was brought to him, though we read of nothing that he spake in his praise.

*And in their Death they were not divided.*] *Jonathan* stuck close to his Father in the Battel; and demonstrated he was engaged in no Conspiracy against him, as he had sometime charged him.

*They were swifter than Eagles.*] In pursuing their Enemies. For this I have often observed, was a requisite Quality in an excellent Warrior: Therefore in the Choice of Soldiers, *Vegetius* saith, *Et velocitas requirenda est & robur*. Both Swiftnes and Strength were to be required, *Lib. 1. de Re militari*, Cap. 8. The great Advantages of being a swift Runner, he enumerates in the next Chapter.

*They were stronger than Lions.*] In overthrowing their Enemies, when they overtook them.

Ver. 24. *Ye Daughters of Israel weep over Saul, who cloathed you in Scarlet, with other delights, and put Ornaments of Gold upon your Apparel.*] He would have the Women bear a Part in this Lamentation over *Saul*, who adorned them with the rich Spoils of their Enemies. The Word *other* before *delights* is not in the *Hebrew*; but the Meaning seems to be, that they delighted in fine Clothes, which they did not want while *Saul* lived. And *Scarlet* was every where accounted the most precious Colour: The Emperor's Mantle being of *Scarlet*, as *Braunius* observes, *L. b. 1. Cap. 15. de Vestitu Sacerd. Hebr.*

Ver. 25. *How are the Mighty fallen in the midst of the Battel! O Jonathan thou wast slain in thy high places!*] Of his own Country, which he valiantly defended.

Ver. 26. *I am distressed for thee, my Brother Jonathan: very pleasant hast thou been unto me.*] His Grief was as great for his Death, as the Pleasure had been, which he took in his Company, while he lived.

*Thy Love to me was wonderful, passing the Love of Women.*] No less ardent, sincere and sweet, than the highest Conjugal Affection. Which ought to be (as *Strigelius* here glosses) ardent without Simulation, sincere without any Suspicions, and sweet without Morosity or Disdain.

Ver. 27. *How are the Mighty fallen.*] This is repeated three times in this Song: Being an interlocutory Verse.

*And the Weapons of War perished!*] All Military Glory gone from *Israel*.

## C H A P. II.

Ver. 1. *AND it came to pass, that after this, David enquired of the LORD.*] By *Abiathar* the High-Priest, as he had often done before, 1 *Sam. xxvi. 9.* and other Places.

*Saying, Shall I go up into any of the Cities of Judah?*] Which was his own Tribe, where he had most Friends; and therefore it was proper, he thought, to address himself to them, who were best affected to him. But though he had a Right to the Kingdom by God's Designation, yet he would not enter into Possession, nor take upon him the Administration of Affairs, without God's Advice and Direction.

*And the LORD said, Go up.*] He approved of his going up into that Tribe; and thereby gave him hope of Success.

*And he said, Whither shall I go up?*] He asked these Questions distinctly, as the *Jews* say the Manner was to do, and not two Questions at once. See upon 1 *Sam. xxiii. 11.* And see what I have further noted, xxx. 8.

*And he said, Unto Hebron.*] Which was a principal City in that Tribe; and in the Middle of it: Where the People might more conveniently and easily resort to him, than in *Ziklag*: Which was his own Town by the Gift of *Achish*, and at first in the Lot of *Judah*. See 1 *Sam. xxvii. 6.*

Ver. 2. *So David went up thither, he and his two Wives, Abinoam the Jezerelite, and Abigail Nabal's Wife the Carmelite.*] Who being hitherto Companions in his Troubles, were now advanced to be Partakers of his Prosperity. This *Theogena* the Wife of *Agathocles* (as *Strigelius* observes) made the Character of a good Wife, who in Marriage enters into Society with a Husband, in all Things, both Good and Evil.

Ver. 3. *And his Men that were with him, did David bring up every Man with his Household.*] He took care to provide for his Followers, and their Families, according to every one's Merit. But this, it is likely, was not done till he was settled: For to go up with so many armed Men, had been to frighten them into Compliance.

And



*And they dwell in the Cities of Hebron.]* Which was given to the Priests to be a City of Refuge (*Josh. xxi. 11, 12.*) and therefore could not contain all *David's* Followers: But only him and his Court. The rest were disposed of in the Cities depending upon *Hebron*.

Ver. 4. *And the Men of Judah came.]* The principal Persons who represented the rest.

*And there they anointed David King.]* Who had been anointed privately by *Samuel*, some time ago; but that was only a Designation of him to the Kingdom; into which he was now solemnly inaugurated by this publick *Unction*.

*Over the House of Judah.]* Who would not presume to know the Sense of all *Israel*: Tho' they hoped they would follow their Example; as they afterwards did, and anointed him again, *chap. v. ver. 3.*

*And they told David, that the Men of Jabesh-Gilead were they who had buried Saul.]* Which it seems he had not heard of, while he was in *Ziklag*; but now (by some Discourse about *Saul's* Death) that Noble Action was related to him; which he recorded to their honour, in *1 Sam. xxxi. 11, 12, 13.*

Ver. 5. *And David sent Messengers to the Men of Jabesh-Gilead, saying, Blessed be ye of the LORD, that ye have shewed this kindness unto your Lord, even unto Saul, and have buried him.]* This demonstrates, both the great Piety, and the great Prudence of *David*. For he testified the true Kindness he had for *Saul*, though his virulent Enemy: And by wishing so heartily the Men of *Jabesh* might be rewarded for what they had done, he invited them (who were *Israelites* on the other side of *Jordan*) to own him for their King.

Ver. 6. *Now the LORD shew Kindness and Truth unto you: and I also will requite you this Kindness, because ye have done this Thing.]* He doth not content himself merely with praying God to reward them (which he repeats again) but promises that he would take care of them, by defending them from the *Philistines*; if they should offer to invade them, for entering their Country without leave, and taking from thence the Trophies of their Victory.

Ver. 7. *Now therefore let your Hands be strong, and be ye valiant.]* As they had been to an high degree, *1 Sam. xxxi. 12.*

*For your Master Saul is dead.]* Or, though your Master *Saul* be dead.

*And also the House of Judah have anointed me King over them.]* He would not have them discouraged, because they wanted one to head them; for he being invested with the Royal Dignity by the Tribe of *Judah*, would look upon himself as bound to protect them also: Tho' they had not owned him for their Sovereign.

Ver. 8. *But Abner the Son of Ner, Captain of Saul's Host.]* A Man of the greatest Authority in *Israel*, after *Saul* was dead; being General of all their Forces.

*Took Ishbosheth the Son of Saul.]* Called *Eth-Baal*, *1 Chron. viii. 31.* as there are several other Names, which end indifferently, either in *Boseth* or *Baal*. For instance, *Gideon* is called *Jerubbaal*, *Judges ix. 1.* and *Jerubbesheth*, *2 Sam. xi. 21.* And *Mephibosheth* is called *Meribbaal*, *1 Chron. viii. 34.* For *Boseth* signifies Shame

and Confusion; and *Baal* being an infamous Idol, the holy Scripture makes these Names end promiscuously either in *Baal*, or *Boseth*, or *Besheth*.

*And brought him over] The River Jordan.*

*To Mahanaim.]* A Place in the Tribe of *Gad*, *Josh. xiii. 26.* So called from the Appearance of an Host of Angels to *Jacob*, as he came to *Padan-Aram*, with his Household, *Gen. xxxii. 1.* Here *Abner* thought he might most securely do what follows, being at a distance from *David*, under whom he could not promise himself that Command and Authority, which he hoped to maintain under *Ishbosheth*.

Ver. 9. *And he made him King over Gilead.]* Over all the Tribes on the other side of *Jordan*: Which are comprehended under this Name.

*And over the Asburites.]* The *Chaldee* Paraphrast understands hereby, the Tribe of *Asher*: Who tho' remote from *Mahanaim*, were forward to acknowledge him.

*And over Jezreel.]* A large and noble Valley, on the Borders of *Zebulun*, *Issachar*, and *Naph-tali*: Who are all comprehended under this Word.

*And over Ephraim, and over Benjamin.]* Under whom the *Simconites* are comprehended.

*And over all Israel.]* All the Tribes on this side *Jordan*, save the Tribe of *Judah*.

Ver. 10. *Ishbosheth Saul's Son was forty years old, when he began to reign.]* Therefore he was born in that very Year in which *Saul* was made King: For he reigned forty Years, as *St. Paul* tells us, *Acts xiii. 21.*

*And reigned two Years.]* Before there was any Hostility between him and *David*. So *Rabag* expounds it, who makes this cohere with *ver. 12.* it being a mere Fancy of the *Jews* in *Seder Olam Rabba*, that the Throne was vacant, and there was no King in *Israel* for five Years. *Vic-torinus Strigelius* his Conjecture is far better: who, after he had given the foregoing Interpretation of *Rabag*, adds, that after the War broke out between *David* and *Ishbosheth*, and *David* waxed stronger and stronger (*iii. 1.*) *Ishbosheth* being an unactive Prince, and unfit to command, *Abner* took the Administration of the Government upon himself, and managed the War the other five Years which passed before *David* came to the Throne of *Israel*. These five Years the Scripture doth not reckon as a Part of *Ishbosheth's* Reign; because he had the meer Name of a King, but no Authority at all.

*But the House of Judah followed David.]* Stuck close to him, and were entirely at his Command.

Ver. 11. *And the time that David was King in Hebron over the House of Judah, was seven years and six months.]* So long therefore *Ishbosheth* reigned over *Israel*. Unless we will suppose, either that the *Israelites* were five Years deliberating whether he or *Mephibosheth* should be King (whose Right it was by the Laws of Succession) or that he reigning two Years immediately after the Death of *Saul*, they were five Years deliberating whether they should own *David* or no; neither of which is probable, as *Rabag* thinks; who judiciously observes, that those Words, *he reigned two years*, are to be joined with *ver. 12. and Abner the Son of Ner went out,*



out, &c. That is, faith he, The two first Years of his Reign there was no War between the House of Saul and David: And then there had been no open War, if Abner had not been the Author of it, &c.

Ver. 12. *And Abner, the Son of Ner, and the Servants of Ishbosheth the Son of Saul.*] The principal Officers about the King.

*Went out from Mahanaim to Gibeon.*] They passed over Jordan, into the Country of Benjamin, where Gibeon was (*Josh. xviii. 25.*) to fight with Judah, and to bring them into the Obedience of Saul's Son. It is observable, that David did not begin any Hostility: But waited to see how God would dispose Things in his favour.

Ver. 13. *And Joab the Son of Zeruiab, and the Servants of David went out.*] To oppose the Designs of the Israelites: For Joab was the chief Commander of David's Forces; whom the principal Officers of his Household attended.

*And they met together at the Pool of Gibeon: and they sat down, the one on one side of the Pool, and the other on the other side of the Pool.*] The two Armies faced one another (as we now speak) being parted only by the Pool that was between them.

Ver. 14. *And Abner said unto Joab.*] I suppose David had commanded Joab not to begin the Quarrel, but only stand upon his Defence. For he had sworn to Saul, that he would not cut off his Seed: And therefore would not willingly engage against Ishbosheth, 1 Sam. xxiv. 21.

*Let the young Men arise, and play before us.*] He desires that some Soldiers might be pick'd out from the rest; and make the two Armies sport, as the Gladiators were wont to do in after-times among the Romans. Whereby also they might make a Trial of their Courage and Strength. So Josephus faith, Abner was desirous to learn πόρος αὐτῶν ἀνδρειότητος στρατιώτου ἔχει, which of the two had the bravest Soldiers.

Ver. 15. *Then there arose and went over.*] The Pool of Gibeon.

*Twelve of Benjamin, which pertained to Ishbosheth the Son of Saul.*] They still were forward to begin the Hostility: And Abner chose this Number out of Benjamin, for the Honour (I suppose) of his own Tribe, and because they were a valiant Sort of People; as appears by the Story in Judges xx.

*And twelve of the Servants of David.*] Whose Valour, no doubt, had been tried in other Exploits.

Ver. 16. *And they caught every Man his Fellow.*] That is, the Servants of David, last mentioned, caught each of them every one of the Benjamites that was his opposite.

*By the Head.*] That is, by the Hair of his Head, which they wore very long in those Days.

*And thrust his Sword in his Fellow's side.*] That is, David's Men killed every one of the Benjamites with whom he was engaged: So some say Josephus understood it; though I can find no such Thing in him.

*So they fell down together.*] All the twelve Men of Benjamin fell down dead together.

*Therefore was the place called Helkath-bazzurim, which is in Gibeon.*] The Hebrew Words

signify, *the Field of strong Men*; as hard and firm as a Rock.

Ver. 17. *And there was a very sore Battel that day.*] The Men of Israel, enraged at the Loss of their valiant Men, maintained a furious Fight the rest of that day.

*And Abner was beaten, and the Men of Israel, before the Servants of David.*] But still Success followed the Men of Judah.

Ver. 18. *And there were three Sons of Zeruiab there.*] She was David's Sister: And therefore these were his Nephews.

*Joab, Abishai, and Asabel.*] All three very valiant Men, and great Commanders, as appears from 1 Chron. xxvii. 7. where the last of them is mentioned as one of David's twelve Captains over four and twenty thousand Men. See also Chapter xi. 26. of that Book.

*And Asabel was as light of Foot as a wild Roe.*] I noted in the foregoing Chapter, and in other Places, that to be swift of Foot, to pursue an Enemy, was a Quality highly esteemed in Warriors. And therefore Plato, I remember, would have this to be one of the Exercises wherein Youth should be trained up, viz. Racing; Ἐστὶ γὰρ πάντων πολεμικώτατον ἡ σάματ' ὁξύτης πάντως ἢ μὲν ἀπὸ τῶν ποδῶν, ἢ δὲ τῶν χειρῶν, &c. Lib. 8. De Legibus, p. 852. Edit. Serrani.

Ver. 19. *And Asabel pursued after Abner.*] Being desirous of the Glory, either of taking or killing the greatest Man in Israel.

*And in going he turned not to the right hand, or to the left, from following Abner.*] Nothing could turn him aside to pursue any other Design: But he went right forward, having Abner only in his eye.

Ver. 20. *Then Abner looked behind him, and said, Art thou Asabel? and he answered I am.*] He speaks to him civilly, having no mind to kill him.

Ver. 21. *And Abner said unto him, Turn thee aside to the right hand or to the left, and lay thee hold on one of the young Men, and take his Armour.*] That he might not return without some Spoil, he bids him take one of his Attendants, his Arms and all; and be content with this Glory of carrying away such a Prisoner. Thus Kimchi expounds it. Others think he bids him try his Valour upon one of his Servants, and disarm him; and not venture to encounter him, who was an old Soldier.

*But Asabel would not turn aside from following him.*] Being possessed with a vain Desire, of more Glory than it was reasonable to expect.

Ver. 22. *And Abner said again to Asabel, Turn thee aside from following me: wherefore should I smite thee to the ground? how shall I hold up my Face to Joab thy Brother?*] Who was a fierce Man, and he knew would study Revenge.

Ver. 23. *Howbeit he refused to turn aside: so Abner, with the hinder end of his Spear, smote him under the fifth Rib, that the Spear came out behind him.*] Pierced quite through his Liver and Bowels. See xx. 10. So R. Johannes, in the Gemarab Sanhedrim, Cap. vi. Sect. 7. faith the fifth Rib is the Place where the Liver and the Gall are seated.

*And he fell down there, and died in the same place.*] He died immediately upon the spot (as we speak,



not being able to go, so much as one Step further. So dangerous it is to confide in a Man's own natural Strength; or to refuse Offers of Peace; or despise a flying Enemy, as *Pellicanus* here observes. The old Saying was, *If an Enemy fly, make way for him.*

*And it came to pass, that as many as came to the place where Asabel fell down and died, stood still.]* Ceased the Pursuit: Fearing perhaps the same Fate; or that *Asabel's* Body should be exposed to any Indignity.

Ver. 24. *Joab also and Abishai pursued after Abner: and the Sun went down, when they were come to the Hill of Ammah, that lieth towards Gath, by the way of the Wilderness of Gibeon.]* They were not so nimble as *Asabel*, and therefore could not overtake *Abner*: Yet so furious, that the Death of *Asabel* could not stop them, till they came to this Place.

Ver. 25. *And the Children of Benjamin gathered them together to Abner, and became one Troop, and stood on the top of a Hill.]* Some of this Tribe, of which *Abner* was, and who were valiant People, as I observed before, rallied, as we now speak; and stood in a Body, as if they would renew the Fight.

Ver. 26. *And Abner called to Joab,] Who was on the Top of another Hill, ver. 24:*

*And said, Shall the Sword devour for ever?] There ought to be a Measure set to our Anger: Which ought to go down with the Sun, as the Apostle speaks.*

*Knowest thou not that it must be Bitterness in the end?] In civil Wars, as Cicero speaks (in his fourth Book of his Familiar Epistles) all Things are miserable, and nothing more miserable than Victory itself: Which makes the Conqueror do many things against his Will, to satisfy those by whom he conquers. Therefore he saith in another Place, Extremum omnium malorum est belli civilis victoria; Victory in a Civil War is the greatest of all Evils. Such was this; as he puts him in mind in the next Words, that they who killed one another were Brethren.*

*How long shall it be, e'er thou bid the People return from following their Brethren?] They were all descended from one common Father; and all worshipped one and the same God.*

Ver. 27. *And Joab said, as God liveth, unless thou hadst spoken, surely then in the Morning, the People had gone up every one from following his Brother.]* He wishes he had been of this Mind in the Morning; for then there had been no fighting at all, if he had not desired it, ver. 14. So Dr. Lightfoot paraphrases this Verse, *If thou hadst not said what thou didst in the Morning, (Let the young Men arise, and play before us) surely the People had gone every one from his Brother: and there had been never a blow struck, but that thou didst provoke it.*

Ver. 28. *So Joab blew the Trumpet,] Caused a Retreat to be sounded.*

*And all the People stood still, and followed after Israel no more, neither fought they any more.] Neither at that time, nor any other.*

Ver. 29. *And Abner and his Men walked all that Night through the Plain, and passed over Jordan.]* They made all the haste they could home: Being fearful to trust themselves near to the Army that had beaten them.

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*And went through all Bitbron, and they came to Mahanaim.]* Some think by *Bitbron* is meant the Mountain of *Bethor*, mentioned *Cantic. ii. 15.*

Ver. 30. *And Joab returned from following Abner: and when he had gathered all the People together,] Returning from the Pursuit, every one resorted to the Company to which he belonged.*

*There lacked of the Servants of David nineteen Men, and Asabel.]* This is an Argument that the twelve Men of *Judah*, who began the Fight in a Combat with as many of *Benjamin*, were not killed: For if they were, then there would have been no more than seven Men killed in the Battle; which is not probable.

Ver. 31. *And the Servants of David had smitten of Benjamin, and of Abner's Men, so that three hundred and threescore Men died.]* This Loss was not great in itself: For it is likely *David* had given order, his Men should be as sparing as they could, in killing their Brethren; who were, he knew, to be his Subjects.

Ver. 32. *And they took up Asabel, and buried him in the Sepulchre of his Father, which was in Bethlehem.]* I think *Josephus* takes this right; who saith, *Joab* and his Men lodged all Night in the Place of Battle, and buried their Dead; and then next Morning carried *Asabel* to be buried among his Ancestors.

*And Joab and his Men went all night,] Having buried Asabel, they marched all the next Night towards Hebron.*

*And they came to Hebron at Break of Day.] Where they gave David an account of all this Action.*

### CHAP. III.

Verse 1. **N**OW there was long War between the House of *Saul*, and the House of *David*.] Their Enmity continuing throughout the whole Reign of *Ishbosheth*, it is likely there were many Bickerings and Skirmishes between *Israel* and *Judah*; but no pitched Battle that we read of. The contrary rather seems to be affirmed in the foregoing Chapter, ver. 28.

*But David waxed stronger and stronger, and the House of Saul weaker and weaker.]* In all their Rencounters (as we now speak) *David* had the better: And it is likely many of the *Israelites* fell off to him; which very much added to his Strength, and weakened the House of *Saul*.

Ver. 2. *And unto David were Sons born in Hebron.]* He had no Children, it seems, during his Exile: Or, if he had, they were Daughters.

*His first-born was Amnon of Abinoam the Jezreelite.]* She was his Wife before *Abigail*, and brought forth his first-born Son; who proved a great Affliction to him.

Ver. 3. *And his second, Chileab of Abigail the Wife of Nabal the Carmelite.]* Of whom we have no further Account any where: Only he is called *Daniel* in *i Chron. iii. 1.* And the Hebrew Doctors give this Reason of both Names. He called him, say they, when he was born, *Daniel*, (which was his Fundamental, that is, his primary Name) because, said he, *God hath judged, or vindicated me from Nabal.* And afterwards he called him *Chileab*, as much as to say, *like to his*

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*his Father*: Because in his Countenance he resembled *David*. And this he did, for this Reason, to silence the Mockers of that Age; who said *Abigail* had conceived by *Nabal*, whose Son this was. For the confuting of which Calumny, God was pleased to order that the Fashion of his Face should be perfectly like to *David's*.

And the third *Absalom*, the Son of *Maacah*, the Daughter of *Talmai*, King of *Geshur*.] We read of the *Geshurites* in the foregoing Book, xxvii. 8. upon whom it is there said *David* made an Inroad; and brought away this fair Captive, a little before *Saul's* Death. And when he came to *Hebron*, and she was sufficiently instructed and prepared to be a Profelyte, he made her his Wife. Thus the *Jews* tell the Story: Which doth not seem to be true, because it is said in that Invasion, he slew all the Women. We must look therefore for other *Geshurites*, whom we find in the North, as the forenamed were in the South. See *Deut.* iii. 14. *Josh.* xii. 5. How *David* came by the Daughter of the King of these People, it is not easy to tell. Perhaps he thought it Policy to make a Friend of the King of *Geshur*, who lay near to *Ishbosheth*, and might be a Curb to him, and give him a Diversion, if he attempted any thing against *Judah*: And therefore married his Daughter.

Ver. 4. *The fourth, Adonijah, the Son of Haggith: the fifth, Shephatiah the Son of Abital.*] Of the former of these, we read in the beginning of the next Book, how his Ambition led him to Destruction (as *Absalom's* did) but nothing of the other.

Ver. 5. *The sixth, Itream, by Eglah, David's Wife.*] This only being called his Wife (though the rest were so likewise) hath led the *Jews* into an Opinion, that *Michal* who was his first Wife is here called *Eglah*; because she was a lovely Woman, in whom he much delighted, when he first married her. It is said indeed in vi. 23. *she had no Child unto the day of her Death*: But the Meaning of that is, she was barren after she had taunted *David* for dancing before the Ark; not that she never had a Child before that time.

*These were born to David in Hebron.*] During the six Years and a half that he reigned there. I do not know what Weight there is in the Observation of *Conradus Pellicanus* on this Place, but leave it to the Judgment of the Reader. God so dispensed Things, that Men in those days, of many Wives, seldom produced many Children, *quasi natura reclamante rei indignitatem*, as if Nature abhorred the Indignity of the Thing, and approved the Conjunction of one Man with one Woman. He did well to say *seldom*; for we read of one who had threescore and ten Sons by many Wives (*viz. Gideon*) though they came to nothing.

Ver. 6. *And it came to pass, while there was War between the House of Saul and the House of David, that Abner made himself strong for the House of Saul.*] Went up and down through all the Tribes of *Israel*, to strengthen his Interest, and confirm them in their Allegiance to *Ishbosheth*: As the same *Pellicanus* expounds it.

Ver. 7. *And Saul had a Concubine, whose Name*

*was Rizpah, the Daughter of Ajah.*] By whom he had two Sons, xxi. 8.

And *Ishbosheth* said to *Abner*, *Why hast thou gone in to my Father's Concubine?*] The *Jews* look upon it as a very great Crime, for any Man, tho' never so great, to marry the Widow of the King: For it was esteemed an Afflictation of the Kingdom; as appears in the Case of *Adonijah*. Therefore *Ishbosheth* had reason to be angry with *Abner*, though he was so unseasonably.

Ver. 8. *Then was Abner very wroth for the Words of Ishbosheth.*] He was grown so haughty, and thought his Merits so great; that he thought he might do any thing, without Reprehension.

And said, *Am I a Dog's Head,*] He thought *Ishbosheth* used him not as a Captain of the Host of *Israel*, but as if he had been a Keeper of Dogs. So the word *Head* signifies, as the *Jews* generally explain it. *Rasi*, for instance; *I am treated as if I was a Commander that hath only the Custody of Dogs*. To the same purpose *Kimchi*: And *R. Esaias* more largely (as *Bochart* observes) *When I am a Leader of all Israel, thou hast cast Contempt upon me, as if I was only set over a Company of Dogs*. So the *Syriack* here translates *Dog* in the Plural: *Captain of a Pack of Dogs*. Which was a vile Employment, because a Dog is generally accounted the vilest Animal, *Hierozoicon*, P. 1. Lib. 2. Cap. 56.

*Which against Judah do shew kindness this day to the House of Saul thy Father, to his Brethren, and to his Friends, and have not delivered thee into the hand of David,*] He insolently reckons up his great Services to him, and to his Family: When he could have ruined him, if he had pleased; by making *David* King, as easily as he had done him.

*That thou chargest me with a Fault concerning this Woman?*] He upbraids him with Ingratitude, in taking notice of such a small Fault (as he accounted it) of lying with *Rizpah*. For as *Peter Martyr* thinks, he did not intend to have her for his Wife; but used her as his Harlot.

Ver. 9. *So do God to Abner, and more also, except as the LORD hath sworn to David, even so do I to him.*] These Words shew he knew very well God had unalterably resolved to bestow the Kingdom of *Israel* upon *David*: And yet his Ambition led him hitherto, to oppose not only *David*, but the LORD himself.

Ver. 10. *To translate the Kingdom from the House of Saul, and to set up the Throne of David over Israel and over Judah, from Dan even to Beersheba.*] A wonderful Change! which the Study of Revenge wrought in him: That he who lately went about the Country, confirming the *Israelites* in their Opposition to *David*, now resolved to bring them all over to him. *Such is the Genius of many great Courtiers, who are irritated upon slight Occasions: and rather rule over Kings, than are ruled by them*. They are the Words of *Conradus Pellicanus*.

Ver. 11. *And he could not answer Abner again, because he feared him.*] He was afraid to provoke him to a higher Degree, by answering him again: And therefore now was silent, when it was too late.

Ver. 12. *And Abner sent Messengers to David on his behalf.*] Having thus incensed his Master, he



he thought it not safe to delay the Execution of what he had threatned. Yet, thought it neither safe nor prudent to go himself to *David*, till he tried his Inclinations by Messengers, whom he privately sent to treat with him.

*Saying, Whose is the Land?*] This was as much as to say, that he owned him to be Lord of all the Country, by God's special Gift.

*Saying also, Make thy League with me; and behold my Hand shall be with thee, to bring about all Israel to thee.*] He desires all Enmities might be forgotten, and that *David* would make a League of Friendship with him: And then he undertook, having a great Power over *Israel*, to make them all his Subjects.

Ver. 13. *And he said, Well, I will make a League with thee.*] He soon agreed to the Motion; with which he could not but be well pleased. But some think he did ill, to make a League with such a wicked Man; especially since he did not enquire of God, whether he should do it or no. But this is more than any body can tell; for many things were done, that are not recorded.

*But one thing I require of thee; that is, thou shalt not see my Face, except thou first bring Michal Saul's Daughter, when thou comest to see my Face.*] This was a very reasonable Condition, if *Abner* was able to effect it; both upon *David's* own account, and her's: For she was his first and beloved Wife; and she was by force given to another Man: who could not lawfully enjoy her; *David* having given her no Bill of Divorce. And therefore *Phalti*, the *Jews* think, being a good Man, never knew her, (as I observed on the foregoing Book, xxv. 44.) So that she lived unhappy, in a double State of Separation; from *David*, and from her present Husband. There was something of Policy also in this Demand; that he might ingratiate himself with the *Israelites*, by showing great Love to the House of *Saul*.

Ver. 14. *And David sent Messengers to Ishbosheth, Saul's Son, saying,*] We do not read what Answer *Abner* gave to *David*, when he required the forenamed Condition of him. But it is probable he let *David* know, as the Truth was, that it was not in his power to bring *Michal* without *Ishbosheth's* Consent, whose Sister as well as Subject she was: At least, it was not safe to attempt it; and therefore he advised him to send to her Brother, who could not easily deny what he desired: Which *Abner* also, it is likely, undertook to represent, as a most just Demand.

This Counsel of *Abner*, *David* followed, and it had the Success he wished.

*Deliver me my Wife Michal, which I espoused to me, for an hundred Foreskins of the Philistines.*] Whom he purchased of *Saul* with the Hazard of his Life.

Ver. 15. *And Ishbosheth sent, and took her from her Husband,*] He is called her Husband, saysthe *Gemara Sanhedrim* (Cap. 7. Sect. 2.) because he loved her with a Conjugal Affection: Tho' he did not enjoy her. This was an honourable Action of *Ishbosheth*, to restore *David* his lawful Wife: Like to which *Strigelius* here notes in several great Men. Particularly in the famous *Scipio*, who restored *Allucius's* Wife to

him, who had been taken by his *Soldiers*. And *Pausanias* General of the *Lacedæmonians*; who after the Fight at *Platea*, sent *Coa*, who was a Captive, unto her Relations.

*Even from Phaltiel the Son of Laish.*] Called *Phalti* in 1 Sam. xxv. 44. The Word *El* is here added, say the *Jews*, because God interposed all the time he had her, to keep them from Sin. For he put a Sword between *Michal* and him, when he went to bed to her; signifying he should be cut off if he lay with her. *Kimchi* and *Rabag* follow this Fancy of the *Talmudists*: But others dislike it, and think that *David* had given her a Bill of Divorce. Unto which he being compelled by *Saul's* Violence, and not doing it willingly, they think it was null; and that *David* might lawfully take her again; tho' *Phalti* had enjoyed her. But *Abarbinel* confutes both these Opinions: And thinks that *Saul* was not so impious as to take a Wife from her Husband, and give her to another: Nor *David* in such need of a Wife, as to send for *Michal*, if she had lived in Wedlock with another Man. And therefore he observes, that *Saul* is not said (in 1 Sam. xxv. 44.) to give her to wife unto *Phalti*, but only to give her: That is, to commit her to his Care and Custody in the Absence of her Husband; that she might live virtuously, and not follow after *David*. For he supposes *Phalti* to have been an old, grave, and pious Man, who might be trusted with her, as he was with the Children of *Merab*, the other Daughter of *Saul*; who sent them to *Phalti* to be educated, and to bear *Michal* Company. As for his being called her Husband (in this Verse and the next) he observes the Word is not *Baalab*, but only *Ishab*; which is used, he saith, for one that is the Keeper and Overseer of another Person.

Ver. 16. *And her Husband went with her along weeping behind her to Baburim.*] Being very loth to part with her Company; which was delightful to him.

*Then said Abner unto him, Return; and he returned.*] *Abner* intended to have the Honour of presenting her to the King: And would not have the old Man appear, to disturb their meeting with his Tears.

Ver. 17. *And Abner*] Having seen *David*, and given him Assurance of his Fidelity, as *David* him of his Friendship.

*Had communication with the Elders of Israel, saying,*] Went back to persuade all, to do as he had done: And by bringing over the great Men to *David*, he doubted not the Multitude would follow.

*Ye sought for David in time past, to be King over you.*] For after the Slaughter of *Goliath*, he was very gracious in the Eyes of all the People, and was much beloved by them, 1 Sam. xviii. 5, 16. And when he was forced to fly, a great many of *Israel* came over to him, while he dwelt at *Ziklag*: Of the *Benjamites*, 1 Chron. xii. 2, &c. and the *Gadites*, ver. 8, 9, &c. and the *Manassites*, ver. 19, &c. and after he came to *Ilebron*, more went over to him out of all the Tribes of *Israel*, ver. 23. and the following Part of that Chapter. And it is highly probable, that as soon as *Saul* and *Jonathan* were dead, they all generally inclin'd to make *David* their



their King: If *Abner*, by his great Authority, had not set up one of the Family of *Saul*.

Ver. 18. *Now then do it.*] Fulfil your own Desires and Intentions.

*For the L O R D hath spoken of David, saying, By the hand of my Servant David I will save my People Israel out of the hand of the Philistines, and out of the hand of all their Enemies.*] We nowhere read these Words recorded; but, it is likely, *Samuel* had often spoken them: If not at length, yet they are included in the Words of God to *Samuel*, when he commanded him to anoint *David* King over *Israel*, 1 Sam. x. 1, 12. for this was the Intention of giving them a King, that he might fight their Battels, 1 Sam. viii. 29.

Ver. 19. *And Abner also spake in the ears of Benjamin.*] Where he had more Interest than among the rest; being of that Tribe: Whom it was necessary to take some pains withal, to gain their Affection to *David*. Therefore he seems to have spoken, not only with their Elders, but to have gone through the several Families in the Tribe: Who were much devoted to the House of *Saul*, and had stuck close to it; and were the first that attempted any thing against *David*, ii. 15.

*And Abner went also to speak in the ears of David in Hebron, all that seemed good to Israel.*] He went, and reported to *David* privately, the Sense of all the People.

*And that seemed good to the whole House of Benjamin.*] Particularly he related how all *Benjamin* stood affected to him: Whom he brought over so effectually, that they never forsook the House of *David*, when all the rest of the Tribes did.

Ver. 20. *And Abner came to David in Hebron, and twenty Men with him.*] Now he appeared publickly, and declared himself for *David*.

*And David made Abner, and the Men that were with him, a Feast.*] Not merely as a Token of Kindness; but to make a League with him (as he had desired, and *David* promised, viz. 12, 13.) Into which it had been an ancient Custom to enter by eating and drinking together, Gen. xxvi. 30. xxxi. 44. and other Places.

Ver. 21. *And Abner said, I will arise and go, and will gather all Israel together unto my Lord the King: that they may make a League with thee.*] He intended to bring all the chief Men of *Israel* to own him for their King, as he had done; and promise to be his faithful Subjects: Which he knew he could effect, because they had already declared their Mind, in the private Conferences he had had with them, ver. 17, &c.

*That thou mayest reign over all that thy Heart desireth.*] That is, over all the Tribes of *Israel*.

*And David sent Abner away, and he went in peace.*] They parted as good Friends do; with wishes of all Happiness on both sides.

Ver. 22. *And behold the Servants of David and Joab came from pursuing a Troop: and brought a great Spoil with them.*] In those times of Distraction between *Judah* and *Israel*, we may well think their Neighbours, who were Enemies to both, the *Philistines*, *Edomites*, *Moabites*, and others, made many Inroads upon the Country to get Spoil. When *Joab* and the great Men about *David* watched, and at this Time had

overtaken them, in their return home, and recovered a great Booty from them.

*But Abner was not with David in Hebron; for he had sent him away, and he was gone in peace.*] Though *Abner* was not there when *Joab* returned victorious, yet he seems to be but just gone, a little way out of the City, ver. 26.

Ver. 23. *And when Joab and all the Host that were with him, were come,*] That is, the Captains of the Host, or principal Officers were come to give an account of their Success.

*They told Joab, saying, Abner came to the King, and he hath sent him away, and he is gone in peace.*] Some officious Courtiers informed him of what had passed in his Absence; as it is likely, they were wont to do of all that the King did. For he that commanded all the Forces, had in effect every body else at his command.

Ver. 24. *Then Joab came to the King, and said, What hast thou done? behold Abner came unto thee, why is it that thou hast sent him away, and he is quite gone?*] He chides the King, as if he did not understand his own Interest; but was to be taught by him. Which high Presumption he was constrained to endure, because of his great Power with the Military Men.

Ver. 25. *Thou knowest Abner the Son of Ner, that he came to deceive thee, and to know thy going out and thy coming in; and to know all that thou doest.*] It is likely that *Joab* himself did not believe, that *Abner* came with a design only to learn how *David's* Affairs stood, and to make his advantage of it: But he would have *David* believe so, that he might have the better Colour for his wicked Design of dispatching *Abner*.

Ver. 26. *And when Joab was gone out from David,*] He seems to have gone out in an Huff; not staying for an Answer.

*He sent Messengers after Abner,*] In the King's Name, I suppose, as if he had something further to communicate to him: For otherwise it is not credible that *Abner* would have returned.

*And brought him back from the Well of Sirah.*] It is not certain where this Well was: But, it is probable, not far from *Hebron*. *Josephus* saith twenty Furlongs distant from thence.

*But David knew it not.*] Gave him no such Order, as he pretended.

Ver. 27. *And when Abner was returned to Hebron, Joab*] Who waited for him at the Entrance of the City.

*Took him aside in the Gate*] Which being a publick Place, where Men met to do Business, and where the Courts of Judgment sat, it made *Abner* suspect no Danger.

*To speak with him quietly;*] Especially since he took him by the Hand in a friendly manner, to have some Discourse with him.

*And smote him under the fifth Rib, that he died,*] Immediately, without speaking a Word. See the foregoing Chapter, ver. 23.

*For the Blood of Asabel his Brother.*] This was one Reason, but the chief was, his Fear that *Abner* would overtop him, if he brought *Israel* to submit to *David*: Being a Man longer versed in Military Affairs than himself; and who had governed *Israel* in the time of *Saul's* Distraction; and since *Ishbosheth* was made King by him. So *Josephus*: He was afraid lest *Ab-*



ner should receive from David, πρώτην τῶν, the highest Place above himself. Upon which he makes this Reflection, ὅσακι πηλίκα, &c. *What will not Men dare to do, who are covetous, ambitious, and will be inferior to none, for to obtain what they desire? They will commit a thousand Crimes: and rather than lose what they have got, they will not fear still to commit greater Wickednesses.*

Ver. 28. *And afterwards when David heard it, he said, I and my Kingdom are guiltless before the LORD for ever, from the Blood of Abner the Son of Ner:]* He lift up his Hands to God (as *Josephus* explains it) and with a loud Voice cried out publicly, that God knew he was innocent in this matter: And therefore trusted he would not let him and his Kingdom suffer for it.

Ver. 29. *Let it rest on the head of Joab,]* The Guilt and Punishment lie upon him; who was the sole Committer of this Murder.

*And on all his Father's House,]* His Indignation at the Fact, seems to have transported him too far; making him wish all *Joab's* Family might suffer for it: Which was against the Law of God (*Deut. xxiv. 16.*) that Children should not suffer for their Father's Sin. It may be looked upon therefore, as a Prophetical Prediction, rather than as a private Imprecation: Or as Words spoken in a great Passion; which made him think the Punishment could not be too fore, or too lasting, for so horrid a Crime. In the Guilt of which *Joab* endeavoured to involve the King, by sending for *Abner* back in the King's Name (as *Josephus* takes it) and so might be thought to have killed him by his Order.

*And let there not fail from the House of Joab, one that hath an Issue,]* Which was such a very noisome Disease, that by the Law of the *Jews*, it made the very Bed on which a Man, that had it, lay, or the Seat on which he sat, unclean. In short, he was no less abominable among them, than a menstruous Woman. See *Levit. xv.*

*Or that is a Leper,]* How filthy he was accounted, see *Levit. xiii.* where by the Law he was secluded from all Society.

*Or that leaneth on a Staff,]* By reason of some great Weakness, or Lameness: Having the Gout, as *Pellicanus* takes it.

*Or that falleth on the Sword,]* This, in our Language, signifies *that maketh away himself.*

*Or that lacketh Bread,]* Is a Beggar, and ready to starve.

Ver. 30. *So Joab and Abishai his Brother slew Abner, because he had slain their Brother Asabel at Gibeon in the Battel.]* It seems *Abishai* was near at hand, ready to assist in the Murder; if there had been any need of his Help.

Ver. 31. *And David said to Joab, and to all the People that were with him,]* To the whole Court.

*Rend your Clothes, and gird you with Sackcloth, and mourn before Abner.]* These were all outward Expressions of very great Sorrow; which *Joab* himself was forced to make a Shew of.

*And David himself followed the Bier.]* Was the chief Mourner. In which the *Jews* think *David's* Passion made him again exceed his Bounds: For *Maimonides* saith, it was not law-

ful, by their Constitutions, for the King to accompany a dead Corpse to the Grave; but he ought to mourn at home. This is their Doctrine in *Sanhedrin*, Cap. 2. Sect. 13. and the *Gemara* there, Cap. 2. N. 5. See *Cocceius* his Annotations. But a famous Writer among them, *Mikotzi*, saith it was indifferent; the King might do as *David* did, if he pleased: For which he quotes *R. Jebuda*. Therefore, though perhaps it was not commonly done, yet *David*, to purge himself from all Suspicion of this Crime, and to shew his extream great Grief for it, thought fit to do *Abner* this publick Honour. See *Guil. Schickardus* in his *Jus Regium*, Cap. 4. Theor. 13.

The Word we here translate, *the Bier*, is in the Original, *the Bed*: On which Persons of Quality were wont to be carried forth to their Graves, as ordinary People were upon that which we call a *Bier*. And Kings were sometimes carried out upon Beds very richly adorned, as *Josephus* tells us *Herod* was, in the latter end of his first Book of the *Jewish Wars*, Κλίνη μὲν δόλοχρυσῶς, &c. The Bed was all gilded, set with precious Stones, and a purple Cover curiously wrought, &c.

It is but a Fancy that they were wont to follow the *Bier*, and not to go before it: To signify that they look'd upon their dead Friends not as lost, but only gone before them; *Præmissi, non amissi*, as *Seneca* speaks.

Ver. 32. *And they buried Abner in Hebron; and the King lift up his Voice, and wept at the Grave of Abner, and all the People wept.]* By this it appears he was buried in Pomp, and with a long Train of People attending his Corpse, as there did the Widow's Son in *Luke vii. 14.* When they came to the Grave, and laid the Corpse there, it was the Custom to make great and loud Lamentations; which are sometimes called *Howlings* in the Prophetical Language. And commonly before the Word *weeping*, there is mention in Scripture of *lifting up the Voice*, in doleful Cries. This is as ancient as *Abraham's* Time, *Gen. xxi. 16.* and we find *Joseph* weeping so loud, upon a different Occasion, that all the House of *Pharaoh* heard him, *Gen. xlv. 2, 14, 15.* The Forms of Lamentation are noted by the Prophets, *Jerem. xxii. 18. Micah v. 16.*

Ver. 33. *And the King lamented over Abner, saying,]* *Josephus* looks upon what follows as a kind of *Epitaph* upon *Abner*, whom *David* buried magnificently, as he speaks, Θάψας δ' αὐτὸν μεγαλοπρεπῶς ὡς ἐπιταφίαις συγγράψαμεν Θρήναις, &c.

*Died Abner as a Fool dieth?]* By a *Fool* in Scripture is often meant a wicked Man, a Malefactor; and so the Sense, according to this Translation, is, Did he die by the Hand of Justice, for some notorious Crime committed by him? or did he die by his own Folly? No such matter. But the Words may be translated out of the Hebrew, *How like a Fool died Abner?* Or, *Should Abner have died like a Fool?* That is, what pity is it, that such a valiant Man should die on this fashion! By Treachery; without any Power to defend himself.

Ver. 34. *Thy Hands were not bound, nor thy Feet put into Fetters.]* He was not a Prisoner, but had both Hands and Feet at liberty; and yet



yet could make no use of them for his own Preservation. *Victorinus Strigelius* thinks that *David*, in these words, distinguishes him from those Criminals, whose Hands being tied behind them, are carried to Execution; and from those idle Soldiers, who being taken captive in War, have Fetters clapt upon their Legs, to keep them from running away. He was none of these; neither a notorious Offender, nor a Coward: But perfidiously murdered by one, in seeming Friendship with him. But the plain Meaning seems to be; that if his Enemy had set upon him openly, he had been able to make his part good with him.

*But as a Man falleth before wicked Men, so fellest thou.]* That is, before a secret Murderer.

*And all the People wept again over him.]* Upon this Speech of the King, which was mournfully spoken, they were so affected, that it drew Tears more plentifully from them.

Ver. 35. *And when all the People came to cause David to eat Meat, while it was yet day,]* This was a Custom among the *Hebrews*; whose Friends were wont to come, after the Funeral was over, to comfort those who had buried their Dead, and send in Provisions to make a Feast. It being supposed, that they themselves were so sorrowful, as not to be able to think of their necessary Food. See *Jerem. xvi. 5, 7, 8.* and *Ezek. xxiv. 17.* and *Grotius* upon that Place.

*David swore, saying, God do so to me and more also, if I taste Bread, or ought else, till the Sun be down.]* He resolved to keep a strict and rigid Fast, which did not end till the Sun was set. Hence it appears that they buried their Dead in the Day-time.

Ver. 36. *And all the People took notice of it.]* Of his great Grief.

*And it pleased them: for whatsoever the King did, pleased all the People.]* They were pleased with the Honour he had done this great Man: Whereby he so ingratiated himself with the People, that they were disposed to put a kind Construction upon all his Actions; as wise, and well becoming him.

Ver. 37. *For all the People,]* Of *Judah*; or, all those that were about the King.

*And all Israel understood that day, that it was not of the King to slay Abner the Son of Ner.]* That he neither ordered it, nor consented to it, nor any way approved it; but was heartily grieved for his Death.

Ver. 38. *And the King said unto his Servants,]* Who perhaps were not sensible enough of this Loss; or, thought he bewailed it too much.

*Know ye not, that there is a Prince, and a great Man fallen this day in Israel?]* He bids them consider his Birth, and his Power, Authority, and Valour, with all his other excellent Qualities: And they would not think it strange that he buried him with so much Pomp, and mourned so heavily for him.

Ver. 39. *And I am this day weak,]* In the *Hebrew* it is *tender*, that is, his Kingdom was young (as we speak) and not settled and confirmed.

*Though anointed King.]* Or as the Words may be translated, *and anointed King.* That is, not born to a Kingdom, but newly called to it,

without any hereditary Right to the Authority; which made it more slender, than if it had been of long standing. This seems to have been the Reason why he did not punish *Joab* for this Murder, because he himself was not well established. He had also been very faithful, and stuck close to him in his Adversity; and had a mighty Power among the Military Men, (as I said before) and was also an excellent Soldier himself; which made him very necessary to *David* in the time of Civil War and Discord between *Judah* and *Israel*. Therefore Prudence made him defer his Punishment, till a better Opportunity. As God himself ordinarily doth not call Men to an Account immediately for their Sins, but takes a time to do it more severely, than if it were done presently.

*And these Men, the Sons of Zeruiah, are too hard for me.]* He and his Brother had got such an Interest in the Soldiery, and among the People both in the Court and Country, that he knew not how to deal with them. Yet he not only sufficiently shewed that he detested their Actions; but that he did not stand in awe of them. For he commanded *Joab* to attend *Abner's* Funeral, with his Clothes rent, and in Sackcloth: And to his face commended *Abner* highly, and condemned his Murder of him (ver. 31, 33, 34.) which was a great Mortification to him; and a kind of Penance which he made him do for his Crime.

*The LORD shall reward the Doer of evil, according to his Wickedness.]* He was confident God would punish him, as he deserved; if he could not do it himself. And this may be look'd upon as a Prayer, that God would not suffer him to escape his Vengeance.

#### C H A P. IV.

Verse 1. **A**ND when Saul's Son heard that *Abner* was dead in *Hebron*, his Hands were feeble.] Having lost his Supporter and Defender; and hearing he was gone over to *David*, as appeared by his dying in *Hebron*.

*And all the Israelites were troubled.]* Because by his Death the Treaty with *David* was broke off; or there was none to manage it with such Authority and Prudence as *Abner* had: And they foresaw some great Change (which they knew not how it would end) by the Loss of this great Man. For so *Plato* observes from long Experience, *Ὅταν μάλιστα κακῶς πράττειν πόλιν, ἔξειλε τῆς ἀγαθῆς ἀνδρὸς ἐκ ταύτης τῆς πόλεως ὁ Θεός, When any Calamity is to befall a City, God is wont to take away excellent Men out of that City.*

Ver. 2. *And Saul's Son had two Men that were Captains of Bands.]* Captains, perhaps, of two Companies of Guards about the King.

*The Name of the one was Baanah, and the Name of the other Rechab, the Sons of Rimmon a Beerothite, of the Tribe of Benjamin.]* The King's own Tribe, which made him repose the greatest Trust and Confidence in them.

*For Beeroth also was reckoned to Benjamin.]* Tho' it was now in the hand of the *Philistines*, yet it belonged to the Tribe of *Benjamin*. *Josh. xviii. 25.*

Ver.



Ver. 3. *And the Beerothites fled to Gittaim.]* When Saul was slain, several Israelites left their Cities and fled, and the Philistines took possession of them: among which, this City, it seems, was once forsaken by its Inhabitants, 1 Sam. xxxi. 7. There was a Place called Gittaim in the same Tribe of Benjamin, Nahum xi. 53. But it is not likely that was the Place here mentioned: For the Beerothites would, in all probability, fly further off from the Philistines.

*And were Sojourners there to this very day.]* When this Book was written, they were not returned to their own Country: Being commodiously settled, I suppose, in the other Place. Why this is here related, it is hard to say: Perhaps it was to show that these were two Soldiers of Fortune (as we now speak) whose Necessity forced them to seek for a Support: Which they met withal at the Court of Ishbosheth; where they came to Preferment.

Ver. 4. *And Jonathán, Saul's Son, had a Son that was lame of his Feet, and was five years old when the Tidings came of Saul and Jonathán,]* That is, the Tidings of their Death, mentioned 1 Sam. xxxi.

*And his Nurse took him up and fled: and it came to pass as she made haste to flee.]* Being in a very great Fright.

*He fell, and became lame; and his Name was Mephibosheth.]* This seems to be related, to show what it was that emboldened these Captains to do what follows: Because he who was the next Avenger of Blood was very young; and besides was lame and unable to pursue them.

Ver. 5. *And the Sons of Rimmon the Beerothite, Rechab and Baanah, went, and came about the heat of the day to the House of Ishbosheth, who lay on a Bed at Noon.]* As the Manner was, and still continues in hot Countries.

Ver. 6. *And they came thither into the midst of the House, as tho' they would have fetched Wheat.]* In the Hebrew, carrying Wheat. Which they either brought into the King's Granaries, for the Use of his Household; or carried forth for the Supply of their Soldiers, who were maintained at the King's Charge.

*And they smote him under the fifth Rib; and Rechab and Baanah his Brother escaped.]* They gave him a mortal Wound: and no body suspecting them, they easily made their Escape.

Ver. 7. *For when they came into the House, he lay on his Bed in his Bed-chamber.]* In a private Room; into which he was wont to retire from Company, when he had a mind to repose himself.

*And they smote him, and slew him, and beheaded him, and took his Head.]* The Privacy of the Place gave them the Opportunity to do all this, without Discovery.

*And gat them away through the Plain all night.]* From Mahanaim to Hebron, it was for the most part a flat Country, till they came to ascend the Mountain, on whose side Hebron stood.

Ver. 8. *And they brought the Head of Ishbosheth unto David, to Hebron, and said to the King, Behold the Head of Ishbosheth the Son of Saul thine Enemy, which sought thy Life; and the LORD hath avenged my Lord the King this day of Saul and of his Seed.]* For they were all now extinguished, except his Grandson Mephibosheth; who was of no account, because of his Lameness.

Ver. 9. *And David answered Rechab and Baanah his Brother, the Sons of Rimmon the Beerothite.]* One of them only spake to the King, but related what they both had done, and therefore he directed his Speech to them both.

*And said unto them, as the LORD liveth, who hath delivered my Soul out of all Adversity.]* Together with this thankful Acknowledgment of God's Care of him hitherto, in all his Straits; he suggests to them, that he needed not the Help of such Men as they, for his future Preservation and Preferment by wicked Acts.

Ver. 10. *When one told me, saying, behold Saul is dead (thinking to have brought good Tidings) I took hold of him, and slew him in Ziklag, who thought I would have given him a Reward for his Tidings.]* He put them in mind of the Story of the Amalekite (Chap. i. of this Book) which they could not but have heard, and thereby might have learnt what Reception they were likely to find with David.

Ver. 11. *How much more, when wicked Men have slain a righteous Person,]* For so Ishbosheth was, in respect of them: to whom he had done no wrong; but preferred them to a Place of Trust and Honour.

*In his own House, upon his Bed?] This aggravated his Crime; and made it vastly different from that of the Amalekite.*

*Shall I not therefore require his Blood at your hand, and take you away from the earth?] As Persons unworthy to live; who had slain their Master, and he a King, in his own House, when he was taking his Repose under their Safeguard.*

Ver. 12. *And David commanded his young Men.]* Who were of his Guard; ready at hand to execute his Commands.

*And they slew them, and cut off their Hands and their Feet.]* By David's Order, no doubt; they having slain their Master with their Hands, and made their escape from Justice with their Feet.

*And hanged them up, over the Pool in Hebron.]* Exposed them in an open, publick Place.

*But he took the Head of Ishbosheth, and buried it in the Sepulchre of Abner in Hebron.]* It seems David had done Abner the Honour to make him a particular Sepulchre: Where he privately interred the Head of Ishbosheth. Whose Body, no question, was buried by the Israelites, with such Honours as were suitable to his Dignity.

## CHAP. V.

Verse 1. **T**hen came all the Tribes of Israel to David unto Hebron.] That is, Embassadors were sent from every Tribe, by a common Agreement among them.

*And spake, saying, We are thy Bone and thy Flesh.]* They were not overcome by the Arms, but by the Piety and Justice of David, to acknowledge him their King: For which they gave several Reasons. The first is general; that he was qualified by the Law of God (Deut. xvii. 15.) which required they should choose one of their Brethren, and not a Stranger. Now he



he was of the same Blood with them, being descended from the same common Father, *Israel*.

Ver. 2. *Also in time past, when Saul was King, thou wast he that led out, and brought in Israel:]* They were induced also by his Valour and Conduct, which he had shewn, they well remembered, in the Reign of *Saul*: When he was so successful in many Expeditions, that he became the Darling of all the People, 1 *Sam.* xviii. 5, 15, 16, 30.

*And the LORD said to thee, thou shalt feed my People Israel, and thou shalt be Captain over Israel.]* This was the chiefest Argument of all; that God they knew had design'd him long ago to be their King: Having said by the Prophet *Samuel*, that he should feed, that is, rule and govern them, and fight their Battels. We do not read these Words any where recorded before now: But *Samuel* having anointed him, no doubt frequently spake of his Office, under the Name of the *Pastor of the People*.

And it is the first time we find a Governour described by this Name in Scripture: Though much used afterward by the Prophets, who speak in this Language; particularly *Ezekiel* xxxiv. 23. and many other Places. Whence our Lord Christ is called the *good Shepherd*, and the *great Shepherd*; that is, Ruler of his People: And both the *Greeks* and the *Romans* have borrowed this Word, to express a supreme Governour. And truly such Rulers as take care of their People, as a Shepherd doth of his Flock, are divine Blessings: Whom *Isaiah* calls *Nursing Fathers*, xlix. 23. On the contrary, they who lay heavy Burdens on their People, fleecing, or rather fleaing them by cruel Oppressions, are called by the Prophets, *roaring Lions*, *hungry Bears* and *devouring Wolves*, *Ezek.* xix. 2. xxii. 27. *Nabum* ii. 11, 12. *Habak.* i. 8. *Zephan.* iii. 3. *Prov.* xxvii. 15. *Companions of Thieves*, *Isa.* i. 23. *Whales*, *Dragons*, or rather *Crocodiles*, *Ezek.* xxix. 3. *Psal.* lxxiv. 13, 14. *Leopards*, *Jerem.* v. 6. and such like odious Names.

Ver. 3. *So all the Elders of Israel came to the King in Hebron.]* He gave the Messengers such a kind Reception, and so thankfully declared his Acceptance of the Offer they made him, that upon their return with his Answer, the *Elders of Israel* came to wait upon him. By whom some understand the Senators of the great *Sabbidrim*: But that's a Fancy which I have often confuted. The plain Meaning is, that the chief Persons of Authority, in every Tribe, came in the Name of the rest of that Tribe, whom they represented.

*And King David made a League with them in Hebron.]* It is not said what the Contents of this League, or Contract was. The *Jews* think it was principally, that there should be an Act of Oblivion of all the Injuries which the People of *Israel* had done to *Judah*, or they to them, in the Reign of *Ishbosheth*. But this is too narrow a Sense: It is more probable, that he assured them he would govern them justly and kindly, according to the Law of God; and they promised to obey him sincerely and faithfully, according to the same Law.

*Before the LORD:]* The Ark of God's Presence was not in *Hebron*; and therefore it is a Question how it could be said, that he made a League

*before the LORD.* But see what I have said of this, *Judges* xx. 1.

*And they anointed David King over Israel.]* They desired the High-Priest to anoint him, whose Office it was: And thereby expressed their Consent he should reign over them. So *Procopius Gazæus* interprets these Words (as he doth ii. 4.) *Iterum suffragiis*, &c. All the Tribes again chose him by their Votes, to be their King. He was anointed three times; first by *Samuel* in his Father's House (1 *Sam.* xvi. 13.) Then when the Tribe of *Judah* owned him for their King (Chap. Second of this Book, ver. 4.) And now when all *Israel* did the same: For which *Abarbinel* gives this Reason; *David's Unction was repeated so often, that it might be the Foundation, and Root, and Principle of all his Posterity*: Who needed no Unction, being anointed in him; unless there was any Controversy about the Succession.

Ver. 4. *David was thirty years old when he began to reign, and he reigned forty years.]* It is uncertain how old he was when he was first anointed by *Samuel*; and how long after he came to the Court of *Saul*; and how long he was in Exile from it. About which Men's Opinions are very different: For some think, as the *Jews* do in *Seder Olam Rabba*, that he was near *Nine and Twenty Years* old when *Samuel* first anointed him: And consequently but one Year in Exile. Others (which is the truer Opinion) that he was *Twenty Years* old at his first Unction, and so almost ten Years in Exile. But it is sufficient for us to know, what we are here told, that he was thirty Years old at his second Unction in *Hebron*, immediately after *Saul's* Death.

Ver. 5. *In Hebron he reigned over Judah seven Years and six Months; and in Jerusalem he reigned thirty and three Years over all Israel and Judah.]* By this it appears, that immediately after his third Unction, he made his Attempt upon *Jerusalem*; as it here follows: Otherwise he could not have reigned there so long.

Ver. 6. *And the King and his Men went to Jerusalem.]* His first warlike Enterprize, after he was their King, was against *Jerusalem*: Which he resolved to reduce out of the hands of the *Jebusites*; who hitherto possessed a noble Part of it, viz. the Fort of *Zion*, which they held, though the *Israelites* dwelt in the other Part of the City.

*The Jebusites the Inhabiters of the Land:]* That is, of that Part of the Land. See *Josh.* xv. 63. *Judges* i. 21. xix. 10, 11.

*Which spake unto David,]* When he came to set down his Army against the Fortrefs.

*Saying, Except thou take away the blind and the lame, thou shalt not come in hither: thinking David cannot come in hither.]* They imagined their Fortrefs to be so impregnable, that by way of Contempt and Scorn, they told him the Blind and the Lame were able to defend it against him, and all his Forces. So *Bochartus* translates these Words, *Non huc accedes*, &c. *Thou shalt not come up hither, but the blind and the lame will drive thee away*; i. e. the most Feeble and Cowardly among us. Which he thinks is so plain a Sense, that he wonders Men of great Learning should seek for any other. *Lib.* 4. *Phaleg.* Cap. 36.



But so it is; a great many by *the Blind and the Lamé* understand the Images of their Gods (particularly our learned Gregory hath a whole Dissertation about it.) As if they had said, our Gods whom ye call blind and lame, that have Eyes and see not, Feet and walk not (as it is *Psalm* cxv.) they shall defend us: And you must overcome them, before you overcome us. *Luther* himself thus explains the Sense; *These Blind and Lamé*, saith he, *were the Idols of the Jebusites; which, to irritate David, they set upon their Walls, as their Patrons and Defenders: And they did as good as say, thou dost not fight with us, but with our Gods, who will easily repel thee.* As for the Fancy of *R. Eliezer* in his *Pirke*, Cap. 36. it is altogether groundless; which is, that when *Abraham* bought the Burying-place in *Macpela* of the Children of *Heth*, he sealed a Covenant with them, that when his Seed should possess the Land of *Canaan*, (as they believed they would) they should not possess the City of *Jebus*. Which Covenant they now engraved upon brazen Statues, and set them upon their Walls; saying, thou canst not enter here, unless thou break the Oath of *Abraham*. See also *Bartoloccius* in his *Kirjath Sepher*, Pars 2. p. 89, &c.

Ver. 7. *Nevertheless, David took the Stronghold of Zion; the same is the City of David.*] Their Taunts and Jeers did not discourage *David*, but he assaulted the Fort and took it; and made it his Royal Seat.

Ver. 8. *And David said on that day,*] When the Assault was made.

*Whosoever getteth up into the Gutter, and smiteth the Jebusites, &c.*] i. e. Cuts off their Pipes of Water, or their Cisterns into which the Water fell: For the Hebrew Word *Tzinnor*, which we translate *Gutter*; is no where found but in this Place, and in *Psalms* xlii. 7. and by *St. Hierom* is translated *Fistulae*. But I know not how we come to transpose the Words, *he that smiteth the Jebusites*, behind the other, which in the Hebrew are first. *He that smiteth the Jebusites, let him throw down into the Ditch* (which was by the Wall) *both the Blind and the Lamé, which David extremely hates.* Thus *Bochart* translates the Words, in the Place above-named: Which if it be admitted, there is no need to add those Words (out of 1 *Chron.* xi. 6.) to make out the Sense, *he shall be Chief and Captain*: For the Sense is compleat without them.

*Wherefore he said, the Blind and the Lamé shall not enter into the House.*] Or, as it is in the Margin, *because they had said, even the Blind and the Lamé, he shall not come into the House.* That is, because they had taunted him with the Blind and Lamé, as if they could defend the Fort, and hinder him from coming into it; therefore he was highly provoked to wish they might be thrown down headlong from their Walls into the Ditch. And then by *the House* is meant, neither the House of *David*, nor the House of the LORD (as many take it) but that very Fort wherein the *Jebusites* had dwelt; from which hereafter they were excluded. And indeed it is a very large Word in the Hebrew, signifying any Place. If we could admit the Fancy of *R. Eliezer*, that the *Jebusites* engraved the Oath of *Abraham* upon brazen Statues,

whereby they pretended that Fort was secured to them and their Posterity; such an abominable Forgery must needs highly incense *David*; whose Soul hated such impudent Frauds.

Ver. 9. *So David dwelt in the Fort, and called it the City of David; and David built round about from Millo and inward.*] The Fort was not wide enough to contain the whole Court; and all his Guards; and others that had occasion to come hither: And therefore he built round about it, from *Millo*. Which some take for that low Place which lay between the Fort and the City: Which was now filled with People, and thence called *Millo*.

Ver. 10. *And David went on, and grew great.*] He proceeded to enlarge his Dominions, as well as his Royal City.

*And the LORD God of Hosts was with him.*] This was the Cause of his great Prosperity, that God, who commands all the Armies of Heaven and Earth, directed and blessed him in all his Enterprizes.

Ver. 11. *And Hiram King of Tyre sent Messengers unto David.*] To compliment him upon his Succession to the Throne, and taking *Jerusalem*. Which was a great Honour; for *Hiram* was a potent Prince, and yet courted *David's* Friendship; because he saw how prosperous he was. And this Friendship continued all *David's* days, unto the Reign of *Solomon*. When his Son, of the same Name, expressed the same Affection to him, that his Father had done to *David*.

*And Cedar Trees, and Carpenters and Masons; and they built David an House.*] Hearing *David* intended to settle in the Fort he had taken; *Hiram* sent him both Materials and Artificers to build him a Palace. For the Jews being given to feeding Cattle, and Husbandry, were not very skilful in Manufactures.

Ver. 12. *And David perceived that the LORD had established him King over Israel.*] For he had both subdued his Enemies, and raised him up Friends.

*And that he had exalted his Kingdom for his People Israel's sake.*] It is an excellent Reflection which *Conradus Pellicanus* made long ago upon these Words: *This is the greatest Grace of a King, that he certainly believes himself to be made a King by God, for the sake of the People: And let him often call to mind, the People were not created or ordained by God for the King.*

Ver. 13. *And David took him more Concubines and Wives out of Jerusalem, after he came from Hebron:*] The Difference between a Wife and a Concubine, the *Talmudists* generally say was, that the latter had neither Dowry settled upon her, nor was taken with all the Rites and Solemnities of Marriage: Yet was a Wife of a lower Rank, as well as the former which had both. See *Selden Lib. de Successionibus*, Cap. 3. and what I have already noted, *Gen.* xxii. 24. and elsewhere. How many *David* had of both sorts, it is not certain: But we read of six Wives he had before, iii. 2, &c. And the Jews, after their Way, endeavour to prove from xi. 8. of this Book, that he had eighteen in all: Which number it was not lawful for the King to exceed; unless he divorced any of them, and took others in their room. See *Schickard*



*de Jure Nep.* Cap. 3. Theorem 9. and *Grotius de Jure Belli & Pacis*, Lib. 2. Cap. 5. Sect. 9. and my Notes on *Deut.* xvii. 17.

*And there were yet Sons and Daughters born to David.]* It was looked upon as a Piece of political Wisdom in Princes, to endeavour to have many Children; that by matching them into many potent Families, they might strengthen their Interest, and have the more Supporters of their Authority.

Ver. 14. *And these be the Names of them that were born to him in Jerusalem; Shammuah, Shobab, and Nathan, and Solomon.]* These are the very same Names with those in *1 Chron.* iii. 5. only a little Variation in the first.

Ver. 15. *Ibhar also, and Elishua, and Nepheg, and Japhia,*

Ver. 16. *And Elishamah, and Eliada, and Eliphalet.]* Here are only seven Sons mentioned in these two Verses: But in the *1 Chron.* iii. 8, &c. there are nine. Of which *Kimchi* gives this Account; that here he mentions only the Sons he had by his *Wives*; but there are some added which he had by his *Concubines*: which doth not well agree with what there follows, ver. 9.

Ver. 19. *But when the Philistines heard that they had anointed David King over Israel.]* So that now *Israel* and *Judah* were united under one Head, they thought it behoved them to bestir themselves: Whereas they seem to have been quiet while the War lasted between *Israel* and *Judah* in the Time of *Ishbosheth*, hoping they might destroy one another.

*All the Philistines went out to seek David.]* They raised all the Forces they were able, to find out *David* and fight him, before he was settled in his new Kingdom. The Friendship between him and King *Achish* was so great, that one would have thought they should have lived in peace. But either *Achish* was dead, or the Lords of the *Philistines*, who were very powerful, over-ruled him, as they did when they forced him to send *David* out of their Army, *1 Sam.* xxix. 6, &c.

*And David heard of it, and went down to the Hold.]* Intelligence being brought him of their Motions, he went from the Fort of *Sion*, to some other strong Place below; where his Army might conveniently have their Rendezvous.

Ver. 18. *The Philistines also came and spread themselves in the Valley of Rephaim.]* Which in *Josh.* xv. 8. we translate the *Valley of Giants*, lying westward of *Jerusalem*; which perhaps they thought to assault.

Ver. 19. *And David enquired of the LORD, saying, Shall I go up to the Philistines? wilt thou deliver them into my hand?] Though David went into a Strong-hold, he did not trust to that, nor intend merely to stand upon his Defence: Yet would not give them Battel, till he was encouraged by God to do it.*

*And the LORD said, Go up, for I will doubtless deliver the Philistines into thy hand.]* A full Assurance of Victory took away all Fear of their great Numbers, which is expressed by their spreading themselves in the forenamed Valley.

Ver. 20. *And David came to Baal-Perazim.]* For thither the *Philistines* marched from *Re-*

*phaim*, where they first pitched: As appears from *1 Chron.* xiv. 11.

*And David smote them there.]* Routed their Army, and slew a great many of them in that Place.

*And said, The LORD hath broken forth upon mine Enemies before me, as the Breach of Waters.]* Overpowered and scattered them; as Waters, when they make a Breach in a Bank, overflow and carry all before them.

*Therefore he called the Name of that Place Baal-Perazim.]* That it might put him and his Posterity in mind of God's great Power and Goodness, which he shewed in this Place: Where the *Philistines* were put into such a Consternation, that they forgot, when they fled, to carry away their Gods with them; as it here follows.

Ver. 21. *And there they left their Images.]* Which they had brought into the Field with them; to be carried before their Host, as a Token of the Presence of their Gods with them. Thus we read in *2 Chron.* xxv. 14. that the *Edomites* had their Gods along with them, when they fought with *Amaziah*. And perhaps they learnt this from the *Israelites*, who carried the Ark (the Symbol of God's Presence) in their Army, when they went to fight with these *Philistines*; who saw it, and took it, as the *Israelites* now did their Images. *1 Sam.* iv. 4, 5, &c. But behold here the Difference between the Ark and these Images. For when the Ark fell into the hands of the *Philistines*, it sorely plagued them, as we read in the foregoing Book: But their Images had no power to hurt the *Israelites*, nor secure themselves from being burnt by them, as it here follows.

*And David and his Men burnt them.]* According to the Command of God, *Deut.* vii. 5.

Ver. 22. *And the Philistines came up again, and spread themselves in the Valley of Rephaim.]* They saw that their All lay at stake, and therefore they mustered up their whole Strength; and perhaps procured the Assistance of other People, to try their Fortune (as we now speak) in another Battel. So *Josephus* relates, that the *Syrians* and *Phœnicians* joined them, and came up *τριπλασίῳ στρατῷ* with an Army three times as big as the former.

Ver. 23. *And when David enquired of the LORD.]* Tho' he had been so successful, yet he would attempt nothing without God's direction; to whom, he knew he owed the former Victory.

*He said, thou shalt not go up.]* That is, not directly: To fight in a pitched Battle, as they did before. So the following Words explain it.

*But fetch a compass behind them.]* Where they suspected no Danger.

*And come upon them over-against the Mulberry Trees.]* A Place well known to *David*: Who was taught by God himself, not to expect Victory always by main Strength; but sometimes to make use of Stratagems.

Ver. 24. *And let it be, when thou hearest the sound of a going, in the tops of the Mulberry Trees.]* In the *Hebrew* it is *Beroshe*, which should not be rendered in the tops (for Men do not walk on the tops of Trees) but in the beginnings; in the very Entrance of the Place, where the Mulberry Tree;



Trees were planted: Where God intended to make a Sound, as if a vast Number of Men were marching to fall upon the *Philistines*. There is no doubt but the *Hebrew* Word *Rofch*, signifies not only the *Head*, but the Beginning of any thing. So *Bochart* observes in his *Phaleg. Lib.* 3. *Cap.* 22. as in *Nabum* iii. 10. *the top* (as we translate it) *the head of every Street*, is the Beginning of those Streets. And *Isaiah* li. 20. *Jer.* xxii. 6. *Gilead* is called *the head of Libanus*, because *Libanus* begins where *Gilead* ends.

*Then bestir thyself.]* Fall upon the *Philistines*. *For then shall the LORD go out before thee, to smite the Host of the Philistines.* By making such a noise of a mighty Host coming to assault them; that they should be amazed, and have no Apprehension of *David's* Army coming behind them.

*Ver. 25. And David did so, as the LORD commanded him, and smote the Philistines from Geba, until thou come to Gazer.]* He pursued them to the very Confines of their own Land; for *Josephus* saith concerning *Gazer*, ἡδε ἔστω ὁρος αὐτῶν τῆς χώρας, *that it was the Border of their Country.*

## C H A P. VI.

*Ver. 1. A*gain *David* gathered together all the chosen Men of *Israel*, thirty thousand.] Having defeated the *Philistines*, and enjoying some Peace, he thought it a seasonable Time, to fetch up the Ark, and settle it in an honourable Place: And for that End summoned the principal Persons in *Israel* to attend it. Or, as others will have it, the most mighty Men in all *Israel*, to the Number of thirty thousand; to be a Guard to it, in case any of their Enemies should attempt to disturb the Solemnity he intended.

*Ver. 2. And David arose, and went with all the People that were with him.]* Not only those thirty thousand, but a vast Number of the common People, as we learn from *1 Chron.* xiii. 2, 5.

*From Baale of Judab.]* Which is the same with *Kirjath-jearim*, *1 Chron.* xiii. 6. called *Baalab*, *Josh.* xv. 9. and *Kirjath-Baal*, *Josh.* xv. 60. xviii. 14. and here *Baale of Judab*, because (as this Place shews) it belonged to that Tribe. But some think there is a great Difficulty here, where it is said they went from *Baale*, when in the *1 Chron.* xiii. 6. it is said they went to *Baale*. But there is no Disagreement in these two Places: For they must go to it, before they could come from it: And here he speaks of their Motion from thence, after they had gone to it.

*And brought from thence the Ark of God.]* Where it had been a long time in the House of *Abinadab*, whose Son was sanctified to attend it. See *1 Sam.* vii. 1.

*Whose Name is called by the Name of the LORD of Hosts.]* Or, because of which the Name is proclaimed the Name of the LORD of Hosts. For by reason of the mighty Miracles which were done before the Ark, the Name of the LORD was highly extolled and magnified, not only among the *Israelites*, but the *Philistines*. And by this, saith *Abarbinel*, it was made known, that

God dwelt among the *Israelites*: So that not only the *Philistines* were affrighted when this Ark of God's Presence came among them, *1 Sam.* iv. 7, 8. but the Men of *Bethshemesh* also, vi. 20.

*That dwelleth between the Cherubims.]* The learned *Lud. de Dieu* thinks the most simple and genuine Construction of all these Words to be, by referring the Word *ascher* (*which*) not to the Ark, but unto God, and translating them thus: *Who is called the Name, the Name of the LORD of Hosts, sitting on the Cherubims, upon it.* Which, saith he, is an egregious Commendation of the Ark, that it is the Ark of that God, who being incomprehensible and unbounded in his Essence, is called absolutely *the Name*, (see *Levit.* xxiv. 11, 16.) even the Name of the LORD of Hosts, who sitteth on the Cherubims over the Ark.

*Ver. 3.] And they set the Ark of God upon a new Cart.]* Which ought to have been carried upon the Shoulders of the *Kohathites*, *Numb.* vii. 9. for which reason no Waggon were allowed to them, as there were to the rest of the *Levites*, to carry several Parts of the Tabernacle. And so *David* himself saith afterward, it ought to be carried, *1 Chron.* xv. 2, 15. And so, after the following Miscarriage, it is plain from the 13th Verse of this Chapter it was so carried. How they came to forget themselves now, so as to put it upon a Cart, one can but conjecture. They seem to have imitated the Custom of other Nations, who were wont to carry their Mysteries in a Chest upon a Cart, drawn by Oxen or Kine, as the *Philistines* did the Ark itself, *1 Sam.* vi. 7, 8. Who not being punished for putting it upon a new Cart, the *Israelites* followed their Example the more securely. And that they were wont also to carry their Mysteries in a great deal of Pomp (as *David* here did, *ver.* 5.) is manifest from abundance of Authors. *Sanchoniathon* mentions an Image in a Shrine in *Phœnicia*, drawn after the same manner; in *Eusebius's* *Præpar. Evangel.* Lib. 1. *Cap.* 15. See our very learned *Dr. Spencer*, p. 816. But that they learnt this from the *Jews*, not the *Jews* from them, seems to me most probable: Though I can give no Account how they came to put the Ark now upon a new Cart, unless it were in imitation of the *Philistines*.

*And brought it out of the House of Abinadab that was in Gibeab.]* Or, on the Hill, as we read, *1 Sam.* vii. 1.

*And Uzza and Abio, the Sons of Abinadab, drave the new Cart.]* It seems *Eleazer* (who was sanctified to take care of the Ark, as we read in the above-named Place) was dead or stayed at home to look after his Father, who was now grown aged: So these two took upon them to be the *Bubulci* (as *Bochart* calls them) who drave the Oxen.

*Ver. 4. And they brought it out of the House of Abinadab, which was at Gibeab, accompanying the Ark of God.]* That is, when it was brought out of his House, the People flock'd together to attend it.

*And Abio went before the Ark.]* He led the Oxen, I suppose; and *Uzzab* went behind the Cart, to take care the Ark fell not out.



Ver. 5. *And David and all the House of Israel played before the LORD*] Who was present where the Ark was.

*On all manner of Instruments made of Fir-wood, even on Harps, and on Psalteries, and on Timbrels, and on Cornets, and on Cymbals.*] Where *Rasi* notes, that these Words *Becol Atze Beroshim*, do not signify any particular Instrument, but (as we translate it) the Wood of which the following Instruments are made; viz. either Fir or Box. As for the Instruments themselves, it will be to no purpose to describe them. The learned Reader may see an Account of every one of them, in *Bartoloccius's Kirjath-Sepher*, Tom. 2. p. 190, &c.

Ver. 6. *And when they came to Nachon's threshing Floor,*] It is commonly thought that *Nachon* was the Name of a Man: But *Bochartus* thinks it rather the Name of a Place; so called by Anticipation, for the Stroke upon *Uzzab*. For *Nacha* signifies to smite, and *Nachon* signifies Percussion: So this Floor was called ever after the Floor of Percussion; because God smote *Uzzab* in this Place. And accordingly in the 1 *Chron.* xiii. 9. it is called the Floor of *Chidon*; which is the very same: For *Chid* signifies Destruction.

*Uzzab put forth his Hand to the Ark of God, and took hold of it; for the Oxen shook it.*] There is no greater Difference, among Interpreters, about the Signification of any Word, than this Word *Sametu*, which we translate *shook it*. That which is nearest to the Truth, *Bochartus* thinks, is our Marginal Translation, *they stumbled*. Yet this is mere guessing, for it hath no Foundation either in the Hebrew, or the neighbouring Languages. But from the Arabick he takes this to be the Sense; that the Oxen coming into a dirty Place, stuck in the Mire; and could not get out their Feet. Which *Uzzab* seeing, and fearing the King and the People, by this Accident, might be stopt too long in their Procession, took hold of the Ark: Intending perhaps to carry it, together with his Brethren, to Mount Zion, which was not far off: But this should have been done at first; and because he did it not, he was punished by God.

Ver. 7. *And the anger of the LORD was kindled against Uzzab, and God smote him there for his error.*] Or, for his Rashness, in touching the Ark: Some think it was because he was not a Levite, and therefore should not have touched it. But it is pretty plain that he was; being the Brother of *Eleazer*, who was consecrated to look after the Ark: Which was the Office of a Levite, 1 *Sam.* vii. 1. But being a Levite, he was guilty of a double Error: First, In not carrying the Ark upon his Shoulders, together with his Brethren; and secondly, In touching it; which he ought not so much as to have seen: But it being covered by the Priests, the Levites were to take hold of the Staves, and carry it, *Numb.* iv. 15.

*And there he died by the Ark of God.*] Or, before the LORD, as it is expressed, 1 *Chron.* xiii. 10. because the Ark was the Symbol of God's special Presence. Some think he was suddenly choaked; others that his Arm and his Shoulder, upon which he should have carried the Ark, were dried up; others, that he was

blasted with Lightning. But all these, and the like Conjectures, are uncertain: It is enough to know, that he died suddenly, not from any natural Cause, but struck by the Hand of God. See *Bochartus* in his *Hierozyicon*, P. 1. L. 2. Cap. 13. who truly observes, that though his Intention, perhaps, was good, yet that would not excuse an Offence against the express Law of God. *Abarbinel* also adds this as a Cause of his Punishment, that he wanted Faith in God: Who would not have suffered his Ark to fall into the Dirt, but supported it himself, without *Uzzab's* help.

Ver. 8. *And David was displeased, because the LORD had made a breach upon Uzzab.*] He took it very heavily: And was angry (as the Word signifies) that there was any Cause for such a Breach, that is such a Destruction. For it detracted much from his Authority and Esteem, to have such an Accident in the beginning of his Reign, and at such a Solemnity of great Joy: Which was hereby disturbed and interrupted. Perhaps, he was troubled, being afraid that he also might suffer, for taking no better care about the carrying of the Ark.

*And he called the Name of the place Perez Uzzab, to this day.*] In memory of this dreadful Stroke: Whereby the Levites and all others might be admonished of their Duty.

Ver. 9. *And David was afraid of the LORD that day, and said, How shall the Ark of the LORD come to me?*] By this it appears, he had some Fear, that he himself was in danger: And therefore durst not bring the Ark into his City. Either thinking, in great Humility, that he was unworthy to have it so near him; or that he did not sufficiently understand how to treat it. Which he understood better afterward, as we learn from 1 *Chron.* xv. 2, 13, 14, 15.

Ver. 10. *So David would not remove the Ark of the LORD unto him, into the City of David: but David carried it aside into the House of Obed-Edom the Gittite.*] He is not called a Gittite from his being born, or dwelling in Gath (which was a City of the Philistines) but from Gath-rimmon a Levitical City, *Josh.* xxi. 24, 25. For it is certain Obed-Edom was a Levite, 1 *Chron.* xv. 18, 21, 24.---xvi. 5. Who, I suppose, was willing to entertain the Ark: Resolving to treat it with such Reverence, that he might not offend the Divine Majesty.

Ver. 11. *And the Ark of the LORD continued in the House of Obed-Edom three Months.*] A short time, in comparison with that which it continued at *Kirjath-jearim*. But all this time it was without the Tabernacle. Which from *Gilgal* being removed to *Shiloh*, after the Death of *Eli*, was carried to *Nob*; and after the Death of *Samuel* to *Gibeon*: Where it remained till *Solomon's* Temple was built, and then carried thither, as we read, 1 *Chron.* xvi. 39. and 2 *Chron.* i. 3.

*And the LORD blessed Obed-Edom, and his Household.*] Made them exceeding prosperous in all their Affairs.

Ver. 12. *And it was told David, saying, The LORD hath blessed the House of Obed-Edom, and all that pertaineth to him, because of the Ark of God.*] They could not tell to what to impute



pute the extraordinary Happiness that attended him, but to his religious Care about the Ark.

*So David went and brought up the Ark of God from the House of Obed-Edom, into the City of David,]* Hoping God would bless him and his City, as he had done Obed-Edom, and his House.

*With gladness.]* All the People, I suppose, again accompanied him, playing on all manner of musical Instruments, as they did before, *ver. 5.*

*Ver. 13. And it was so, that when they that bare the Ark, had gone six paces,]* Without any Mark of God's Displeasure, as before, *ver. 7.*

*He sacrificed Oxen and Fatlings.]* As a Thank-giving to God for his Goodness, upon an Altar erected on purpose, on this extraordinary Occasion. Some think he repeated these Sacrifices seven times, at the end of every six paces. The Word we translate *Fatlings*, is in the Hebrew, *Meri*: Whose Signification is uncertain. For some take it for a *Lamb*, others for a *Ram*, and others put a different Meaning on it. But *Bochartus*, with great Probability, thinks it was a kind of Ox, being commonly joined with Oxen in Scripture, not only here, but in *1 Kings i. 9, 19, 25. Isa. i. 11.-----xi. 6. Nor doth 1 Chron. xv. 26. contradict this, where it is said, they offered Bulls and Rams. For those are not the same Sacrifices with these, which were offered by David; whereas those in the Chronicles were offered by the Levites. See his Hierozoicon. P. 1. Lib. 2. Cap. 19.*

*Ver. 14. And David danced before the LORD with all his might; and David was girded with a Linen Ephod.]* He laid aside his Royal Ornaments, and was girded only with a simple Ephod: Which was, I observed upon *1 Sam. ii. 18.* an honorary Garment, used by those who were no Priests. He is said to dance before the LORD, because the Ark was the Symbol of the Divine Presence. And from hence, it is probable, the Heathen learnt to dance before their Gods: As *Callimachus* mentions the Chori and Dancings of Youth at the Altar of *Apollo*. And as there were *παῖδες χοροί*, so there were also *ἄνδρες χοροί*, and among the *Lacedemonians* of old, Men also. And *Plato* observes, that among the *Egyptians* all kinds of Musick, and Songs and Dances were consecrated to their Gods, *Lib. 3. de legibus, p. 799.* See that great Man *Ezek. Spanhemius's* Observations on *Callim. Hymn. in Apollinem, ver. 8.*

*Ver. 15. So David and all the House of Israel brought up the Ark of the LORD with shouting, and with the sound of the Trumpet.]* Such *ὀλολυγμοί*, as the *Greeks* call them, were used before their Gods: Of which the great Man now mentioned gives a large Account in his Observations upon *Callimachus* his Hymn ad *Delum, ver. 258.* Where he observes, that *ὀλολύζειν* anciently signified to shout for Joy: And in like manner the Latin Word *ululare* is used by *Statius* for exultare. And this sort of Rejoicing is at this Day used by the *Abyssines*, in the Evening of our LORD's Resurrection; when Men and Women shout and clap their Hands, and dance to several Instruments of Musick, till Morning Light: And all this in their Churches. Which in all likelihood came from the *Jews*, who still dance in some of their Festivals. See *Ludolphus* in his Comment upon his *Historia Æthiopica.*

*Pag. 381.* where he observes, that *David*, in all probability, did not now dance alone, but in company.

*Ver. 16. And as the Ark of the LORD came into the City of David, Michal, Saul's Daughter, looked out through a Window, and saw King David leaping and dancing before the LORD; and she despised him in her heart.]* Imagining that he debased himself, by stripping himself of the Ornaments of Majesty, and dancing among the common People. But she understood not, as *Procopius Gazæus* here glosses, *ardoris stimulos*, these Stings of Divine Love which *David* declared to her afterward.

*Ver. 17. And he brought in the Ark of the LORD, and set it in its place, in the midst of the Tabernacle that David had pitched for it.]* The ancient Tabernacle made by *Moses*, remained still, as I observed before at *Gibeon*: From whence *David* did not think fit to fetch it, because he intended shortly (as *Pellicanus* well observes) to build a Temple to settle it in. For the present therefore he only hung some Curtains round about it, after the Fashion of the Tabernacle. See *vii. 2.*

*And David offered Burnt-Offerings and Peace-Offerings before the LORD.]* To implore the Continuance of his Mercies to them; and to thank him for those they had received.

*Ver. 18. And as soon as David had made an end of offering Burnt-Offerings and Peace-Offerings, he blessed the People in the Name of the LORD.]* He prayed God to bless them; and pronounced them blessed in his Name.

*Ver. 19. And he dealt among the People, even among the whole Multitude of Israel, as well Women as Men, to every one a Cake of Bread and a good Piece of Flesh, and a Flaggon of Wine.]* The *Talmudists* have a Conceit, that the Hebrew Word *Eshpar*, which we translate a good Piece of Flesh, signifies the sixth Part of a Bullock: Deriving it from three Words put into one, *viz. Echad* one, *Shesh* six, and *Par* a Bullock. But every one sees this is a very forced Fancy; and it is not in it self credible, that he could among such a Multitude deal a sixth Part of a Bullock to every one; or that they could well carry it away, with the Bread and Wine. *Bochartus* more reasonably thinks (as some of the *Jews* do) the Word is derived from *Shapar*, which signifies decorus: And so the Meaning is, as we translate it, he gave to every one an handsome or decent Portion of Flesh. See his *Hierozoicon, P. 1. Lib. 2. Cap. 18.*

*So all the People departed every one to his House.]* Well satisfied with their Prince's Bounty to them, and his Piety to God.

*Ver. 20. Then David returned to bless his Household.]* As he had done the People.

*And Michal the Daughter of Saul came out to meet him, and said, How glorious was the King of Israel to-day.]* This she spake ironically, by way of Derision and Contempt.

*Who uncovered himself to-day.]* Stript himself of his Royal Robes, and put on a Linen Ephod. *ver. 14.*

*In the eyes of the Handmaids of his Servants.]* The Women perhaps bare a part in these Dances, as they did in *Exod. xv.* or at least were Spectators of all the Solemnity: From which none were excluded, though ever so mean.



*As one of the vain Fellows shamelessly uncovereth himself.]* Throws off all his Clothes, and cares not who sees him, nor with what Company he dances. This was spoken by way of Reproach, that he mixed himself with the Multitude; and seems to intimate that he had immodestly exposed himself, as shameless Fellows do; which is not credible. But thus in a Fit of Passion he aggravates this Action, as very mean, yea base, and much below himself. For no doubt David kept himself within the Rules of Modesty, when he was thus jocund, being about a sacred Business; and did according to the Command of God, who required the Israelites to rejoice in their Feasts (*Deut. xii. 7. xvi. 1.*) not with a futilous, lascivious, and petulant Joy, but with a pious and moderate; as having God himself present. And thus *Plato* observes, *Lib. 7. de Legibus*, that some Dances are ἐμελῶς, with modest and decent Motions of the Body: Others πλεημελῶς, immodest and wanton. The latter of which none can imagine David would be guilty of before God: But danced with composed and decent, not desultorious and light Motions; such as vain Fellows are wont to use. For as it is Joy that excites Men to leap and dance, so divine Joy moves them to do it after a manner becoming the divine Majesty.

*Ver. 21. And David said to Michal, It was before the LORD, which chose me before thy Father, and before all his House; and appointed me Ruler over the People of the LORD, over Israel: Therefore will I play before the LORD.]* Who had done so much for him, that he thought he could not show himself thankful enough to so great a Benefactor. He thought fit to take down her Pride, by putting her in mind, how God had rejected all her Family, and advanced him to the Throne of Israel.

*Ver. 22. And I will yet be more vile than thus, and will be base in my own eyes.]* He thought nothing too mean for him to stoop unto; if thereby he could do any Honour unto God. Otherwise to dance in the Streets before all the People, had been very unbecoming the Majesty of a King: As *Nero* (we are told by *Suetonius*) and *Caligula* were condemned for it, among the Romans. For among them it was not usual, nor was it done in Honour of their Gods. Whereas in David's Time the greatest Persons thus expressed their Joy and Thankfulness to God, by publick leaping, dancing, shouting and clapping their Hands.

*And of the Maid-servants which thou hast spoken of, of them shall I be had in honour.]* The more he humbled himself to do honour unto God, the more he was confident he should be magnified, and had in honour by his People. The Esteem of the meanest of which upon that account, he valued far more than all the vain-glorious Praises Michal could bestow on him, for taking State upon him, and neglecting God's Service.

*Ver. 23. Therefore Michal the Daughter of Saul had no Child until the day of her Death.]* Which is thus explained in the *Gemara Sanhedrin*, Cap. 2. Sect. 8. She had Children before this Fact, but none after it as long as she lived. See iii. 5. David perhaps quite left her Bed.

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## C H A P. VII.

*Ver. 1. AND it came to pass when the King sat in his House, and the LORD had given him rest round about from all his Enemies.]* Enjoyed himself in the Palace Hiram had built for him (*v. 11.*) having no disturbance from the Philistines, or other neighbouring Nations.

*Ver. 2. That the King said unto Nathan the Prophet; See how I dwell in a House of Cedar; but the Ark of God dwelleth within Curtains.]* Like a religious Prince, he spent much of his Time in pious Meditations: And among other things reflected upon the Meanness of God's Habitation, in comparison with the Splendor of his own. Which he thought ought not to be endured, and therefore resolved to build a stately House for God to dwell in.

*Ver. 3. And Nathan said unto the King, Go, do all that is in thine heart: for the LORD is with thee.]* He spake that as a prudent Man, not as a Prophet. For (as *Procopius Gazæus* here observes) the Prophets did not see all Things; but those only which the divine Grace revealed to them: As *Samuel* was ignorant which of Jesse his Sons was to be anointed, till God told him. But Nathan had great reason for what he said, because he observed that the LORD had an extraordinary Kindness for David, and prospered him in all that he went about. And David withal being a Prophet as well as himself, he might presume this Intention was suggested to him from God.

*Ver. 4. And it came to pass that Night, that the Word of the LORD came to Nathan, saying,]* God would not suffer him long to remain in an Error; but corrected it the very next Night.

*Ver. 5. Go and tell my Servant David.]* He speaks very kindly of him; tho' he did not approve of his Design.

*Thus saith the LORD, Shalt thou build me an House for me to dwell in?]* The Meaning is, he should not build one. But this Manner of Speech declared his Mind something sharply: To reprove him for his Forwardness (without asking God's Consent) not only in designing, but in making a Vow, that he would forthwith build God an House. For it is probable, that upon Nathan's approving his Intention, he made that Vow mentioned *Psalms cxxxii. 3, 4, 5.* Surely I will not go up to my Bed, nor give sleep to mine Eyes, &c. till I have found out a place for the LORD, an Habitation for the mighty God of Jacob.

*Ver. 6. Whereas I have not dwelt in any House since the time I brought up the Children of Israel out of Egypt, until this day.]* As much as to say, how comest thou to design me a fixed House, since neither I, nor any one else thought of one from the Time you have been a People?

*But have walked in a Tent, and a Tabernacle.]* Contented myself with a moveable House, consisting of a Tent and a Tabernacle: In which I was always present to conduct and lead my People from Place to Place. By a Tent is meant the inward Hangings of the House, which were of curious Work: And by the Tabernacle



3 *bernacle, the Boards to which they were fastened; and the Badgers Skins, &c. wherewith all was covered.*

Ver. 7. *In all the Places wherein I have walked with all the Children of Israel, spake I a Word with any of the Tribes of Israel.]* That is; of the Judges of Israel, as it is interpreted, 1 Chron. xvii. 6. For the word *Shibte* signifies not only Tribes, but Scepters; and consequently supreme Governors, and Rulers: Such as the Judges were, who had the supreme Authority in Israel. And so the following Words explain it.

3 *Whom I commanded to feed my People Israel.]* He did not command the Tribes, but the supreme Governors of them, to feed, that is, to rule his People, and take care of their Happiness. Here again, feeding is governing (as I observed, v. 2.) and the Hebrew Word for feed being *raga*, as some pronounce it (in the Syriack, *rega*) very learned Men thence derive the Latin Words, *regere* and *reges*: Kings being designed by God to be the Pastors of their People.

*Saying, Why build ye me not an House of Cedar?] God was the properest Judge what House was agreeable to him, and he never signified that he disliked his present, and desired a more stately Habitation.*

Ver. 8. *Now therefore, so shalt thou say unto my Servant David.]* He would not have him think he took it ill, that he should design what he never signified to be his Desire; but owned him to be his faithful Servant; and therefore accepted his pious Intentions: As we read expressly 1 Kings viii. 18. which is signified in this Message.

*Thus saith the LORD of Hosts, I took thee from the Sheep-cote, from following the Sheep, to be Ruler over my People Israel.]* Therefore he needed not to make any doubt, but that God accepted his Gratitude, in designing to make him an House.

Ver. 9. *And I was with thee whithersoever thou wentest.]* In the Time of his Banishment, when he was remarkably preserved by God.

*And have cut off all thine Enemies out of thy sight.]* Both those in Israel, and those in the neighbouring Countries.

*And have made thee a great Name, like to the Name of the great Men that are in the Earth.]* Famed in all the Countries round about, as a potent Prince, and a mighty Warriour: And perhaps, as an holy Prophet greatly beloved of God, and of all his People.

Ver. 10. *Moreover, I will appoint a Place for my People Israel.]* Or, *I have constituted (or established) a Place for my People; viz. the Land of Canaan.*

*And will plant them,] Make them take root there.*

*That they may dwell in a Place of their own, and not move any more.]* No longer wander, as they did in the Wilderness.

*Neither shall the Children of Wickedness] The Idolatrous People round about them.*

*Afflict them any more, as before time.]* When they were in the Land of Egypt.

Ver. 11. *And as since the time that I commanded Judges to be over my People Israel.]* In

whose Days they were forely afflicted by the Moabites, Canaanites, Midianites, and other People.

*And have caused thee to rest from all thine Enemies.]* Given him a quiet Possession of the whole Kingdom of Israel; which never was in so happy a Condition as now. A flourishing People is a great Blessing to the King that governs them; and therefore mentioned in this Verse, as God's Kindness to David. But this Promise was with some Exceptions, in case they became disobedient: Which provoked God to chastise them.

*Also the LORD telleth thee, that he will make thee an House.]* A Family, or Royal Off-spring, that shall reign for many Generations: Which was a special Favour of God to David; there being none of the Roman Emperors, till the Time of Antoninus, whose Children from the Reign of Julius Caesar succeeded them in the Empire, but only Vespasian.

Ver. 12. *And when thy days be fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy Fathers; I will set up thy Seed after thee.]* To sit upon his Throne.

*Which shall proceed out of thy Bowels.]* This shews that he speaks of one, who was not yet born, viz. Solomon: And that Absalom, Aio-nijah, and the rest who pretended to the Kingdom, were not designed for it: Being already proceeded from him.

*And I will establish his Kingdom.]* He reigned a long time himself; and so did his Posterity after him.

Ver. 13. *He shall build me an House for my Name, and I will establish the Throne of his Kingdom for ever.]* The latter part of this Verse can belong to none but the Messiah; if the Words for ever be taken in their full extent.

Ver. 14. *And I will be his Father, and he shall be my Son.]* This the Apostle shews is meant of Christ, Hebr. i. 5. For tho' Solomon was called Iedidiab, in token that he was beloved of God, yet in the compleat Sense of the Words, Christ only is intended; who is God's beloved Son in whom he is well pleased.

*If he commit iniquity, I will chasten him with the Rod of Men, and with the Stripes of the Children of Men.]* This is a mixt Prophecy, some part of which belongs to Christ, and the other Part to Solomon, and his Successors in the Kingdom of Israel: Who, it is plain, is solely intended in these Words. And by the Rod of Men, and Stripes of the Children of Men, is meant gentle Correction; such as Parents give their Children.

Ver. 15. *But my Mercy shall not depart from him, as I took it from Saul, whom I put away before thee.]* He promised not to translate the Kingdom into another Family; as he took it from Saul to give it to David: But the Kingdom shall continue in his Line.

Ver. 16. *And thy House and thy Kingdom shall be established for ever before thee: thy Throne shall be established for ever.]* That is; saith Kimchi, for a long time, between four and five hundred Years, which was a rare Thing, and seldom known, that the King's Authority continued in any one Family so long. But this is chiefly intended of the Kingdom of Christ, as Procopius Gazæus here observes: From whence the Jews



Jews said, *John xii. 34. We have heard out of the Law, that Christ abideth for ever.* This is confirmed by the Rule which *Maimonides* lays down in his *More Nevachim*, that though *Olam* alone doth not necessarily signify eternally, yet when it is joined with *ath* either before or after it, it doth so signify. And that is the Case here; this Kingdom is said to be established *ath Olam*: Which can belong to none but Christ; for *David's* Kingdom had an End, but Christ's hath none. *Pars 2. Cap. 28.*

Ver. 17. *According to all these Words, and according to this Vision; so Nathan spake unto David.]* This shows the Integrity of the Prophet; who was not ashamed to retract his own Words when he was better taught of God. And as *Dionysius* observes in an Epistle to *Novatus*, *μεῖζον ἔσται τὸ σφάλμα τὸ κατόρθωμα*, the Correction of his Fault was more eminent and remarkable than the Fault itself.

Ver. 18. *Then went King David in, and sat before the LORD.]* That is, before the Ark; which, as I have often said, was the Symbol of his Divine Presence. *Sitting* among the Heathens, was thought a Posture proper enough in the Divine Service; as *Vossius* hath observed, *Lib. 2. de Orig. & Progressu Idolat. Cap. 34. Quippe index animi magis compositi, & hoc agentis*, being an Indication of a more composed Mind, and attending to what they were about. But among the *Israelites* none were allowed to sit in the Temple, except the King: Unto whom this was indulged, if we can believe the *Talmudists*; whose general Maxim was this, *It was not lawful for any one to sit in the Court of the House of God; but only for the King of the House of David.* See *Selden Lib. 2. de Synedriis, Cap. 13. Sect. 4.* But they have framed this Notion, merely from this single Passage: There being no other Place in the whole Scripture to support this Assertion, that the King might sit at Prayer: But on the contrary, on the Sabbath, and on festival Days when he came to the Temple, he stood by the exterior Pillar of the inward Court of the House of God; as may be learnt from *Ezek. xlvi. 1, 2.* (compared with *2 Kings xi. 14.* and *2 Chron. xxiii. 13.*) Nor is there any other Posture of Worship mentioned in Scripture, but standing, or kneeling, or falling on the Face. And therefore *Abarbinel* ingenuously confesses, that this is not the Opinion of all their Doctors; several of which in this forsake the *Talmudists*; and alledge a weighty Reason for it; because the Angels themselves, who are higher than Kings, are not permitted to sit before the LORD: But *Isaiah* saith, *vi. 2.* that the *Seraphim* stood about the Throne; and *Micaiah* saith, he saw the Host of Heaven stand before the LORD, *1 Kings xxii. 19.* and see *Zachariah iii. 7.* From which they conclude, if there be no sitting allowed above, by what Right was it granted to the Kings of *David's* Family here below? Many great Men therefore translate the Hebrew Word *Jashab* not *sat*, but *remained* before the LORD: Particularly *Vatablus* upon *1 Chron. xvii. 16.* And others, who allow the King might sit in the Temple, yet confess he might not sit at Prayer: And therefore expound this Place thus; *He took his Seat in the Tabernacle before the Ark: And then*

he made the following Prayer, standing up; as the Manner was, when they worshipped God.

*And he said, What am I, O LORD God; and what is my House, that thou hast brought me hitherto?] He begins his Address to God in a very becoming manner; with a most profound Debasement of himself, and Confession of his own Unworthiness, to receive such Blessings as God had already bestowed upon him.*

Ver. 19. *And this was yet a small thing in thy sight, O LORD God; but thou hast spoken of thy Servant's House, for a great while to come.]* Next, he magnifies the Loving-kindness of God, who did not think it enough that he had made him a great King; but promised his Posterity, and at last the LORD Christ, should sit upon his Throne. So *Abarbinel* himself expounds these Words *a great while to come*: Intimating, saith he, the *Messiah*, the Son of *David*.

*And is this the manner of Men, O LORD God?] He acknowledges there was no Example of such Kindness to be found in this World: Where Kingdoms are not perpetuated, as Abarbinel observes; but this is the Manner of Angels, who always continue in their Dignity.*

Ver. 20. *And can David say more unto thee?] There was nothing he could desire beyond this.* See *1 Chron. xvii. 18.*

*For thou LORD God knowest thy Servant.] But he thought he might leave all to God, who loved him and took care of him (for that is, to know him) as his faithful Servant.*

Ver. 21. *For thy Word's sake, and according to thine own Heart, hast thou done all these great things.] For God, he knew would fulfil his own Promise made by Samuel and by Nathan: To the making of which he had no other Motive, but his own good Will; from whence alone all the great Things proceeded, which he had done for him.*

*To make thy Servant know them.] That David might know how much God loved him, by what he did for him.*

Ver. 22. *Wherefore thou art great, O LORD God.] He could not therefore but acknowledge his omnipotent Power, and the Greatness of his Goodness, which bestows such Benefits upon unworthy Creatures.*

*For there is none like the LORD, neither is there any God beside thee.] According to what Hannah had said in her Song, wherein she prophesied of him, 1 Sam. ii. 2.*

*According to all that we have heard with our Ears.] Which their Forefathers had reported of the Wonders he had done; by Moses and Joshua, and in the time of the Judges.*

Ver. 23. *And what one Nation in the Earth is like thy People, even like Israel, whom God went to redeem for a People unto himself,]* He seems to imitate the Words of Moses, in *Deut. iv. 7, 34:*

*And to make him a Name,]* That all the World might know how powerful he was.

*And to do for you great things, and terrible for thy Land,]* To introduce them into the Land of Canaan.

*Before thy People, which thou redeemest to thee from Egypt, and from the Nations and their Gods?] Some understand by Gods, their Rulers: But their Gods were no more able to save the Nations*



tions whom he drove out, than their Kings and Rulers were.

Ver. 24. *For thou hast confirmed to thy self thy People Israel to be a People unto thee for ever: and thou, LORD, art become their God.*] This is the Sum of the Covenant (as *P. Martyr* observes) between God and them: That they should be his obedient People, and he would bless them, and bestow all manner of good things upon them.

Ver. 25. *And now, O LORD God, the Word that thou hast spoken concerning thy Servant, and concerning his House, establish it for ever: and do as thou hast said.*] After his thankful Acknowledgments, he makes his humble Prayer to God, that he would perform his Promise to him. For though he did not doubt of it; yet it became him to make it his Request.

Ver. 26. *And let thy Name be magnified for ever, saying, The LORD of Hosts is the God over Israel; and let the House of thy Servant David be established before thee.*] Yet he did not desire it merely for his own sake; but that God might be glorified in what he did for him: And Men might always acknowledge, that the God of Israel was the LORD of Heaven and Earth; and faithful in his Promise to the House of David.

Ver. 27. *For thou, O LORD of Hosts, God of Israel, hast revealed to thy Servant, saying, I will build thee an House: therefore hath thy Servant found in his heart to pray this Prayer unto thee.*] That he might not be thought too bold in his Request, he professes he should not have taken this Confidence, if God himself had not encouraged it, by his own most gracious Promise to him.

Ver. 28. *And now, O LORD God, thou art that God, and thy Words be true, and thou hast promised this Goodness unto thy Servant.*] He professes his Belief of the Unchangeableness of God's Nature, and of the Truth of all that he said: Upon which he relied with an unshaken Faith.

Ver. 29. *Therefore now let it please thee to bless the House of thy Servant, that it may continue before thee for ever: for thou, O LORD God, hast spoken it, and with thy Blessing let the House of thy Servant be blessed for ever.*] Since God has been so gracious as to make such Promises, and his Word could not fail; he grows more confident to repeat his Petition, which he had made before. Which is not the vain Repetition, condemned by our Saviour: But proceeded from the abundant Affection of an Heart devoutly affected; which could not sufficiently acknowledge the Goodness of God, and express his full Assurance that he would fulfil his Word. To this purpose *Abarbinel*; *David* did not multiply Prayer for want of Faith, because he distrusted the Power of God; or thought his Will was mutable; or that he doubted of his Prophecy concerning him: But rather, this shows that he steadfastly rested assured of all this.

## C H A P. VIII.

Verse 1. **A**ND after this it came to pass, that David smote the Philistines, and subdued them.] In the Beginning of his Reign they invaded him twice, v. 17, 22. But now David

invaded their Country, and made a Conquest of it; and brought it in subjection to the Israelites.

And David took *Metheg-Ammah* out of the hand of the Philistines.] That is, the famous City of *Gath*, and the Territories thereof (as it is expounded, 1 *Chron.* xviii. 1.) which is called *Metheg-Ammah*; because it stood upon Mount *Ammah*: And was as a Bridle to the whole Country, whereby it was kept in obedience. So our Translators understand the word *Metheg* in the Margin of our Bibles. But *R. Solomon* takes it for a Goad, or a Staff; this City domineering over the Philistines. For we read of no King in any of their other Cities: Either in *Gaza*, or *Ashdod*, or *Ekron*, or *Ascalon*; but only in this: where *Achish* formerly reigned, but, it's likely, was dead. There are several other Interpretations in *Bochart* his *Hierozyicon*, L. 2. Cap. 18. P. 1.

Ver. 2. *And he smote Moab,*] Now was fulfilled the Prophecy of *Baalim*, *Numb.* xxiv. 17.

And measured them with a Line,] Having conquered the whole Country, he took an exact Survey of every Part of it.

Casting them to the ground.] Laying level their strong Holds and fortified Places.

And with two Lines measured he, to put to death.] He divided the Country into three equal Parts; condemning two of them to be destroyed.

And with one Line he saved alive.] A third Part he preserved, that he might not be quite dispeopled. This Severity, the Jews say, he exercised because they had slain his Parents, and his Brethren, whom he committed to the Custody of the King of *Moab*, during his Exile, 1 *Sam.* xxii. 3, 4. But in truth, because the *Moabites* had always been implacable Enemies to the Israelites; their Kindness to *David*, before-mentioned, proceeding from their Hatred to *Saul*.

And so the *Moabites* became *David's* Servants, and brought Gifts.] And paid *David* a constant Tribute, which continued all his Days, and in the Reign of *Solomon*: And after the Kingdom was divided, it was paid to the Kings of *Israel*; till after the Death of *Ahab* they refused to pay it, as we read 2 *Kings* iii. 4, 5.

Ver. 3. *And David smote also Hadadezer the Son of Rehob,*] Who is called also *Hadarezer*: For the change of these two Letters, *Dalet* and *Resh*, is very frequent, as *Bochartus* hath shown in many Instances, P. 2. *Hierozyicon*, Lib. 2. Cap. 7. *Nicolaus Damascenus* in a Fragment of his recorded by *Josephus* (L. 7. *Antiq.* Cap. 6.) simply calls him *Adad*; which was a common Name of the Kings of *Syria*: Who according to the manner of the Eastern Princes, took their Titles from the Celestial Bodies, as *Sir John Marsham* observes; and *Adad* was the Name of the most glorious of them, viz. the Sun, as *Macrobius* tells us: Who truly saith, it signifies *unus*, one.

King of *Zobab*,] *Zobab* was a part of *Syria*, whose Eastern Border was *Euphrates*, as the Western was the Land of *Canaan*, and the Kingdom of *Damascus*. It is frequently called *Aram-Zobab* in Scripture; of which *Bochartus* in his *Phaleg*. Liv. 2. Cap. 7. where he observes the Nearness of *Zobab* to *Judaea*, from the frequent Wars the Israelites had with that People, in the Days of *Saul*, 1 *Sam.* xiv. 47. and *David*,



Chap. x. of this Book; and Solomon, 2 Chron. viii. 3. and they of Damascus came to help them, which is a sign they were near them, (ver. 5. of this Chapter) and Rezin fled from thence to Damascus, 1 Kings xi. 24. And especially he observes that the Cities Solomon built in the Wilderness, viz. Palmyrene, and others (1 Kings ix. 17, 18.) are said to be in Hamath, 2 Chron. viii. 4. which shows the Situation of Zobab.

*As he went to recover his Border at the River Euphrates.]* That is, as David went to extend the Limits of his Kingdom (according to the ancient Prophecy, Gen. xv. 18.) towards the River Euphrates, he smote this King, who came out perhaps to oppose him. See 1 Chron. xviii. 3. where it is said, *he went to establish his Dominions by the River Euphrates*: Which seems to relate to David, not to Hadadezer.

Ver. 4. *And David took from him a thousand Chariots,]* The Word Chariot is not in the Hebrew: But it is well supplied by our Translators, out of 1 Chron. xvi. 4. in which Book many things are explained, which are briefly related here.

*And seven hundred Horsemen,]* Here again is an Ellipsis, as in the foregoing Words: For in 1 Chron. xviii. 4. it is said seven thousand. But as after a thousand something is to be understood, viz. Chariots; so after seven hundred something is to be understood, viz. Captains (as Abarbinel explains it) under whom a great many others served; so that Commanders and Soldiers made, in all, seven thousand. Such an Ellipsis is observed in this very Book, v. 8. *whoever smites the Jebusites, and the Blind and the Lame, &c.* It is not said what shall be their Reward; which is plainly mentioned, 1 Chron. xi. 6. where it is said, *he shall be chief*. See L'Empereur on Bava Kama, Cap. 7. Sect. 7.

*And twenty thousand Footmen, and David bought all their Chariot-Horses,]* Here again is the same Ellipsis, for there is no Word in the Hebrew for Horses. Yet the Meaning can be nothing else, but that he cut the Hamstrings of the Horses that drew their Chariots, and made them unserviceable hereafter. See Josh. xi. 9. Thus in x. 18. David is said to have slain seven hundred Chariots, that is, the Horses of so many Chariots: And in Psalm lxxviii. 18. *by the Chariots of the LORD*, some understood Horsemen: And lxxvi. 6. *the Chariot and Horse, &c.* That is, as well the Horses that drew the Chariot, as they that rode in it. See Bochartus in his Hieroz. P. 1. L. 2. Cap. 6.

*But reserved of them for an hundred Chariots.]* For his Guard, I suppose, not for War: God having commanded them not to multiply Horses, Deut. xvii. 16. See there.

Ver. 5. *And when the Syrians of Damascus came to succour Hadadezer King of Zobab,]* For they were Neighbours to him, as I observed on ver. 3.

*David slew of the Syrians of Damascus twenty thousand Men.]* Which facilitated the Conquest of their Country: Which follows in the next Verse.

Ver. 6. *Then David put Garisons in Syria of Damascus.]* Aram Damasek, which we translate Syria of Damascus, was that Part of Syria which

lay between Libanus and Antilibanus; whose chief City was Damascus, situated in a Valley called by several Names in Scripture, as Bochartus notes, viz. Hoba, Gen. xiv. 15. the Valley of Aven, and Beth-eden, i. e. the Place of Pleasure, Amos i. 5. and Hadrach, Zachar. ix. 1. It was watered by five Rivers; the two principal of which descended from Mount Hermon, viz. Abana, and Pharpar, (2 Kings v. 12.) The last of which ran by the Walls of Damascus; the other ran through it, and divided the City into two Parts.

*And the Syrians became Servants to David, and brought Gifts.]* In token of their Subjection to him.

*And the LORD preserved David whithersoever he went.]* Kept him from all the Dangers to which he was exposed in these Wars.

Ver. 7. *And David took the Shields of Gold that were on the Servants of Hadadezer, and brought them to Jerusalem.]* The Hebrew Particle *El*, which we translate *on*, may better be translated *with*, that is, in the Custody of Hadadezer's Servants, who were Officers in his Treasury: for it is not likely they brought them into the Field of Battel.

Ver. 8. *And from Bera, and from Berotbai, Cities of Hadadezer, David took exceeding much Brass.]* These two Cities are called by very different Names in 1 Chron. xviii. 6. tho' perhaps of the same Signification in the Language of that Country, with these in the Hebrew Language. Or there were four Cities, perhaps, from whence he took much Brass; two here mentioned, and two in the Book of Chronicles. It is the Opinion of some learned Men, that these Cities were situated at the foot of the Mount Libanus, between Emath and Damascus: Which Mount, they say, abounded with Brasses. But Bochartus could find no mention of the Brasses of Libanus in any ancient or modern Writer. And the Kingdom of Zobab lying about Palmyra, he takes the City called Berotbai to be the same with that which Ptolemy calls Βερύβαι in Arabia deserta; which is very remote from Libanus, P. 2. Hierozoicon, Lib. 6. Cap. ult.

Ver. 9. *When Toi King of Hamath had heard that David had smitten all the Host of Hadadezer,]* This City was also in Syria, and was called afterwards Epiphania, as St. Hierom says, and lay North of Judæa. See Bochart in his Phaleg. Lib. 4. Cap. 37.

Ver. 10. *Then Toi sent Foram his Son]* Called Hadoram, 1 Chron. xviii. 10.

*Unto King David,]* At Jerusalem, I suppose. *To salute him, and bless him,]* To congratulate his good Success in the War with Hadadezer; and to wish him continued Prosperity.

*Because he had fought against Hadadezer, and smitten him: For Hadadezer had Wars with Toi.]* And was too hard for him.

*And Foram brought with him Vessels of Silver, and Vessels of Gold, and Vessels of Brass.]* As a Present to King David; whose Friendship he sought by this Embassy.

Ver. 11. *Which also King David did dedicate unto the LORD,]* As he did what he took from Hadadezer.

*With the Silver and Gold that he had dedicated of all People that he had subdued.]* These Words seem to import, that he was so far from multiplying



plying Silver and Gold to himself (which *Moses* forbade, *Deut.* xvii. 16.) that he put all this Spoil, or the greatest part of it, into God's Treasury: For the building of the Temple, which he designed, and his Son was to accomplish, vii. 13.

Ver. 12. *Of Syria, and of Moab, and of the Children of Ammon, and of the Philistines, and of Amalek, and of the Spoil of Hadadezer the Son of Rehob, King of Zobah.*] Here he reckons up all the Countries, besides *Hadadezer's*, from whence he brought Spoil to the Treasury of God.

Ver. 13. *And David gat him a Name, when he returned from smiting the Syrians.*] His Victory over that People (mentioned, *ver.* 5.) when they came to succour *Hadadezer*, gained him a great Reputation, as a potent Prince, and a mighty Warrior.

*In the Valley of Salt, being eighteen thousand Men.*] There is nothing in the *Hebrew* answering to the word *being*: Which therefore should be translated, *in the Valley of Salt eighteen thousand Men.* That is, he slew of the *Edomites* so many, besides the two and twenty thousand of the *Syrians*. So we read expressly, *1 Chron.* xviii. 12. and in the Title of the lxth *Psalms*, it is said, they were *Edomites*, not *Syrians*, who were slain in this Valley. Only in that Place of the *Psalms*, there is mention of no more than twelve Thousand slain: Which makes some think it speaks of a distinct Battel from this. But *Abisbai*, who began the Fight, perhaps slew six Thousand, and then *Joab* coming in with his Reserve, slew twelve Thousand more; which in all make eighteen Thousand. By the *Valley of Salt*, *Epiphanius* understands the dead Sea, which was formerly a famous Valley, or rather it was a Valley near that Sea. But neither of these Opinions have any good Foundation, as *Salmasius* shews: Who takes this *Valley of Salt* to have been in the Country of *Edom*, where this Battel was fought; and to be called by this Name, either from the Salt Springs which were therein, or from the Salt that was digged up there. See his *Exercit. Pliniana*, Cap. 35. p. 613, 614.

Ver. 14. *And he put Garisons in Edom; throughout all Edom put he Garisons.*] Having conquered the whole Country, he garisoned the strongest Places in it, with his own Men; to keep them in subjection to him. Some of the *Jews* translate these Words, *He put Captains or Commanders in Edom*, that is, great Men to govern them, and as his Deputies to keep them under and raise Tributes, &c.

*And the LORD preserved David whithersoever he went.*] God's Providence continued still over him to protect him, as formerly (*ver.* 6.) in all these Expeditions.

Ver. 15. *And David reigned over Israel,*] He had no Disturbance at home, whilst he made Wars abroad: But all *Israel* obeyed him.

*And David executed Judgment and Justice to all his People.*] And having finished his foreign Wars, he applied himself to the Civil Government of his People, according to the Law of God; which he executed duly by himself, or by his Judges. Or rather, while he was engaged in so many Wars abroad, he did not neglect his People at home; but took care that Justice

should be administered to them. And so he performed both Parts of such a King, as the *Israelites* desired, *1 Sam.* viii. 20.

Ver. 16. *And Joab the Son of Zeruiah was over the Host.*] According to the Promise made to that Person, who should first enter the strong Fort of *Zion*, when he assaulted it; *1 Chron.* xi. 6.

*And Jehoshaphat the Son of Abilud was Recorder.*] The *Hebrew* Word *Mazkir* importing something of keeping in memory, or bringing to remembrance, moved our Translators to render it *Recorder*, or *Remembrancer*: As if he wrote the Acts of every Day; which afterwards were digested into *Annals*. But this sure was not so considerable an Employment as to make him that had it; the prime Civil Officer in the Kingdom, as *Joab* was the Military. Therefore *Victorinus Strigelius* takes him to have been the *Chancellor* of the Kingdom: Which is more likely than their Opinion, who take him for the *Master of Requests*, who presented Petitions, and put the King in mind of them.

Ver. 17. *And Zadok the Son of Abitub, and Abimelech the Son of Abiathar were the Priests.*] These two were the chief of the Family of Priests; next to the High-Priest, which was *Abiathar*: called *second Priests* in *2 Kings* xxv. 18. The former was of the Family of *Eleazar* (*1 Chron.* vi. 5.) the other of *Ithamar*. And *Zadok* is put first, as more acceptable to *David* than the other: And therefore it is likely, constantly attended at Court; the Family of *Eli* now beginning to decline, as in the next Reign the other was advanced to the High-Priesthood, and *Abiathar* and his Posterity quite thrown out. See *Selden*, *Lib.* i. *de Success. ad Pontific.* Cap. 4. *Cornelius Bertram* hath a peculiar Conceit, that as *Abiathar* was always acknowledged by *David* as God's High-Priest, and accordingly took care of the *Ark* at *Jerusalem*, so *Zadok* as principal Priest among the rest, was set over the *Tabernacle* at *Gibeon*. But *Abarbinel's* Opinion is farthest from Truth, that *Zadok* was now High-Priest, and *Abiathar* but his Vicar: Which is directly against the Scripture, which shews *Abiathar* to have been High-Priest 'till the Days of *Solomon*. Yet to justify this, he thinks fit to tell a fabulous Story out of *Joma*, and other Books, which say that *David* removed *Abiathar* from his Office, when he fled from *Arsalom*. For commanding him to enquire of God for him, by *Urim* and *Thummim*, God was pleased to give him no Answer: But *Zadok* inquiring, had an Answer. Whereupon *David* concluded the Spirit of God was gone from *Abiathar*, and that it was time to fulfil the Prophecy against the House of *Eli*; and so thrust him out of his Office. For which they have no other grounds but this, that *David* spake first to *Zadok*, Chap. xv. of this Book, *ver.* 24. See *J. Wagensel* upon *Sota*, p. 1068, 1069.

*And Seraiah was the Scribe.*] Secretary of State, as we now speak; or as others imagine, Clerk of the Council, who set down all Acts and Decrees; others, the Keeper of the publick Accounts. But the *Hebrew* word *Sopher* (which we translate *Scribe*) importing something of Learning (as the word *Scrive* in the New Testament doth) I take him to have been



his prime Counsellor in the Law, who always attended him. *Constantine L'Empereur* thinks there were two sorts of *Scribes*, an Ecclesiastical and a Civil; and here understands the latter: And would have him signify no more than the *Muste-Master* of the Army. See his Annot. on *Bertram. de Repub. Jud.* p. 383, &c.

Ver. 18. *And Benaiah the Son of Jehoida was over the Cerethites, and the Pelethites.*] Or, the *Cretbites*, and the *Plethites*, as some pronounce these Words. What they were, is variously conjectured. The most idle Conceit is that of some of the *Jewish* Doctors, who take them for the Members of the great *Sanhedrin*, nay, for *Urim* and *Thummim*. See *Selden, Lib. 2. de Synedr. Cap. 15. p. 601. and Cap. 16. p. 668.* Certain it is that they were Soldiers, as appears from *xv. 18. --- xx. 7. 1 Kings i. 34.* Where they are mentioned as present at the proclaiming King *Solomon* against *Adonijah*: Which could not have been done safely, without some armed Force; and if they were not the Persons, there were none. Yet they were not common Soldiers, but the constant Guards of *David's* Person; like the *Prætorian* Bands among the *Romans*. So *Josephus* calls them *σωματοφύλακες*, *Keepers of the Body*, who never departed from the Place where the King was: As we may be satisfied by this, that they had a peculiar Commander, and were not under *Joab*, the Captain of the Host; but are distinguished from his Soldiers, *xx. 6, 7.* Some make them Men of a gigantick Stature, but I know no ground for that; though no doubt, they were proper Men, as we speak, robust, and of tried Fidelity: who in the Rebellion against *David*, did not desert *David*, but stuck close to him, *xv. 18.* It is further probable, that they were selected out of a certain Nation, or Family. For the *Cerethites* inhabited part of *Palæstine*, and were indeed the same with the *Philistines*, as I observed upon *1 Sam. xxx. 14.* and see *Zephan. ii. 5.* The *Pelethites* it is likely were a Family in *Israel*: For we find two of the name of *Peleth* mentioned in Scripture. One of the Tribe of *Reuben*, *Numb. xvi. 1.* another of *Judah*, *1 Chron. ii. 33.* Their Arms were Bows and Arrows, and Slings; if we may believe the *Chaldee* Interpreter, who calls them *Archers* and *Slingers*: As *Procopius Gazæus* calls them *jaculatores* & *sagittarios*. Which may be confirmed by this Conjecture, that the *Philistines* having sorely gauged the *Israelites*, in the fatal Battle with *Saul*, by their Archers, *David* took care not only to have his People instructed in the use of the Bow, but also procured some Archers from the *Cerethites*, who were a part of the *Philistines*, to be his Guard: As some Princes now get the *Switzers*. See my Notes upon *1 Sam. xxxi. 3.* and upon the first Chapter of this Book, *ver. 18.* The Number of them may be probably gathered from the Targets and Shields of Gold that *Solomon* made, which were five hundred, *1 Kings x. 16, 17.* and were for the use of his Guard, *2 Chron. xii. 9, 10, 11.* and kept in the Guard-Chamber.

They that would see more of them, may look into a little Treatise of *Opitius*, which is wholly upon this Subject: And *Fortunatus Scacchus* treats largely of them in his *Myrothe-*

*cium*, iii. *Cap. 16, 17, 18.* where he hath this singular Opinion, *p. 181.* that the *Cerethites* were inferior to the *Pelethites*: But I think with great reason concludes, that they were the King's Domesticks, and lay in his Palace, or about it, in the Night: Which he gathers from *1 Kings i. 33.* where *David* bid *Nathan* and *Zadok* and *Benaiah* take with them the Servants of their Lord, and make *Solomon* King; and accordingly they took the *Cerethites* and the *Pelethites* with them, *ver. 38.* And from the Story of that brave Man *Uriah*, who would not go to his own House to his Wife, when *Joab* and the Host lay in the Field; but went and slept at the Door of the King's House with the Servants of his Lord, that is, with these *Cerethites* and *Pelethites*, *Chap. xi.* of this Book, *ver. 9.*

*And David's Sons were chief Rulers.*] So the Hebrew Word *Cohen* often signifies, not only a Priest, but a Prince; as many learned Men have observed: particularly *Hacksplan* in his *Miscellanea*, *Lib. i. Cap. 5. Sect. 15.* but especially *Selden. Lib. 2. de Senedr. Cap. 16. p. 671, &c.* Where he shews that the Hebrew Word signifies any Minister, either of God or of Man. As in the twentieth Chapter of this Book, *ver. 26.* *Ira* the *Fairite* is said to be a *Cohen*, which we translate *chief Ruler* about *David*; and so the *Chaldee*, and the *Spanish* Jews, a *principal Officer*. But by the Law, neither he, nor *David's* Sons could be Priests. There can be therefore no doubt of this, that they were the principal Officers in the Court of *David*, the prime Ministers of his Household: Such, as among us, are the Lord High Chamberlain, Steward, Treasurer, &c. as appears from *1 Chron. xviii. 17.* where this Matter is thus explained, *they were at the hand of the King*: Waiting on him, as chief Officers in his Court, or as *Cornelius Bertram* explains it, *publicos* & *primarios Ministros*, the publick and principal Ministers of State. See *Bochartus, Lib. 2. Canaan, Cap. 17.* And this was the reason, they say, of *Absalom's* Discontent, that he was not one of these *Ἀυλάρχαι*; or, had not a Place according to his mind.

## CHAP. IX.

Verse 1. *AND David said, Is there yet any that is left of the House of Saul, that I may shew him Kindness for Jonathan's sake?*] Having ended his Wars, and settled his Kingdom and Court, now he considers what private Obligations he had; especially to the House of *Saul*, but above all to *Jonathan*. For he promised *Saul* with an Oath, that he would not cut off his Seed, *1 Sam. xxiv. 21, 22.* and had made a Covenant of Friendship with *Jonathan* and his Posterity for ever; confirmed also by an Oath, *1 Sam. xx. 14, 15, 16, 17, 42. --- xxiii. 18.*

Ver. 2. *And there was of the House of Saul, a Servant whose Name was Ziba.*] He had been employed in some Business in *Saul's* Family; but being a *Canaanite* (as some of the *Jews* will have it) he did not recover his Liberty with the Death of *Saul*, but still continued in servitude under *David*.

And



*And when they had called him unto David, the King said unto him, Art thou Ziba? And he said, thy Servant is he.]* He was in such an inferior Station, that David did not know him; though some among his Courtiers did.

Ver. 3. *And the King said, Is there yet any of the House of Saul, that I may shew the Kindness of God unto him? And Ziba said unto the King, Jonathan hath yet a Son, which is lame on his Feet.]* Here David, like a good Man and a worthy Friend, and a noble Prince, thinks how he may perform his Promise to Jonathan, 1 Sam. xx. 14. where he obliged himself to shew the Kindness of the LORD, that is, great Kindness, to his Posterity.

Ver. 4. *And the King said unto him, Where is he? And Ziba said, He is in the House of Machir, the Son of Ammiel, in Lo-debar.]* A Place on the other side Jordan; in Mount Gilead, (see xvii. 27.) where it is likely his Friends thought him safe: Being far from David; whom they looked upon as an Enemy. See ver. 7.

Ver. 5. *Then King David sent, and fet him out of the House of Machir, the Son of Ammiel, from Lo-debar.]* It is likely he sent Ziba to bring him to Court, and to assure him of the King's Kindness.

Ver. 6. *Now when Mephibosheth] Called also Merib-baal, 1 Chron. viii. 34.---ix. 40.*

*The Son of Jonathan the Son of Saul, was come to David, he fell on his Face, and did reverence.]* As the manner was when Men came into the presence of the King, or the King's Son: For thus David himself did to Jonathan, 1 Sam. xx. 41.

*And David said unto him, Mephibosheth. And he answered, Behold thy Servant.]* The King spake in a very friendly manner to him: And he answered as humbly.

Ver. 7. *And David said unto him, Fear not.]* This intimates that he had Apprehensions David might have an evil eye upon him, as one that had a Pretence to the Kingdom.

*For I will surely shew thee Kindness, for Jonathan thy Father's sake, and will restore thee all the Land of Saul thy Father,]* Which he had purchased before he was King, or acquired afterward, or was descended to him from his Father: but had been confiscated (as D. Kimchi observes) to the King's Exchequer, because Ishbosheth and the House of Saul had rebelled against David, who was the LORD's Anointed. And accordingly afterward David gave all this Land to Ziba, when he accused Mephibosheth of Treason against him, xvi. 6. See Selden de succession. ad Leges Hebræorum, Cap. 25. fol. 89.

*And thou shalt eat Bread at my Table continually.]* As one of his own Children, ver. 11.

Ver. 8. *And he bowed himself,]* In token of his Thankfulness.

*And said, What is thy Servant, that thou shouldest look upon such a dead Dog as I am?]* This is an high Expression of his Unworthiness of any Favour. For a Dog was accounted a vile and unclean Creature, and a dead Dog was of no use at all. See iii. 8. 1 Sam. xxiv. 15. Where David spake thus to Saul, as Helena (Bochart observes) did to Hector. There being no greater Expression of Humility than this, for one to be so abject as to call himself a Dog.

In like manner, he that calls another so (as Abishai doth Shimei, and Ulysses doth the Woers, to whom he calls  $\omega \nu \nu \epsilon \varsigma$ , Odyss. 10.) expresses the utmost Contempt of them.

Ver. 9. *Then the King called to Ziba Saul's Servant, and said unto him, I have given unto thy Master's Son all that pertained to Saul, and to all his House.]* Some understand by his Master's Son, the Son of Mephibosheth (called Micah, ver. 12.) because Ziba was not to provide for Mephibosheth himself, who was to be maintained by the King at his Royal Table. But it may as well be thought to be meant of Mephibosheth, who had this Estate given him for such uses as he should think fit to appoint.

Ver. 10. *Thou therefore, thy Sons and thy Servants shall till the Land for him, and thou shalt bring in the Fruit, that thy Master's Son may have Food to eat.]* This may seem to favour what was said before, that he was to manage the Land for the Benefit of Micah the Son of Mephibosheth, and his Household, who were to be maintained out of the Product of it: But the following Words, I think, shew the contrary.

*But Mephibosheth thy Master's Son, shall eat Bread always at my Table.]* Now he declares publicly, what he had said privately to Mephibosheth. Who being the Person here plainly called his Master's Son (i. e. the Son of Jonathan) it inclines me to conclude, that he is understood before by that Name: Whose Family was to be maintained by the Fruit of the Estate that David gave him; though he himself was to eat always with David.

*Now Ziba had fifteen Sons and twenty Servants.]* Who were sufficient to manage a very great Estate.

Ver. 11. *Then said Ziba unto the King, According to all that my Lord the King hath commanded his Servant, so will thy Servant do. As for Mephibosheth, said the King, he shall eat at my Table as one of the King's Sons.]* Those Words, said the King, are not in the Original Text: So that these Words may be thought to be Ziba's; who said he would keep a Table for Mephibosheth also, if David pleased, and entertain him royally; the Land being sufficient to afford it. But I do not see how he could call it my Table; which must be the Language of David: Who now repeated what he had said before, that Ziba should take no care of Mephibosheth.

Ver. 12. *And Mephibosheth had a young Son, whose Name was Micah.]* Who had many Sons, from whom issued a numerous Progeny, which lasted many Generations. 1 Chron. viii. 34, 35, &c.---ix. 40, 41, &c.

*And all that dwelt in the House of Ziba, were Servants unto Mephibosheth.]* And consequently accountable to him for all that they received out of the Estate: Which, it appears by this, was settled upon him.

Ver. 23. *So Mephibosheth dwelt at Jerusalem.]* Ziba went to take care of his Land, which was at Gibeab of Benjamin, but Mephibosheth staid with the King, that he might partake of his Bounty.

*For he did eat Bread continually at the King's Table; and was lame on both his Feet.]* Tho' he could not go, yet he was carried thither; for



so the Words may be translated, *though he was lame, &c.* This Defect and Blemish did not hinder him from being entertained by the King, with the greatest Kindness; which procured him, though despicable in his Person, Honour from the People, as one in great Favour with their King.

## CHAP. X.

Verse 1. **A**ND it came to pass after this, that the King of the Children of Ammon died,] Who, it appears by the next Verse, was *Nabash*: To whom *Saul* gave a very great Defeat at *Jabesh-Gilead*, 1 Sam. xi.

And *Hanun* his Son reigned in his stead.] For it seems that was an hereditary Kingdom, as most were in those Countries and Times.

Ver. 2. Then said *David*, I will shew Kindness to *Hanun* the Son of *Nabash*; for his Father shewed Kindness unto me.] All generous Minds are full of Gratitude and Compassion, as *Strigelius* here observes out of several heathen Authors. But there is no Example of it greater than in *David*, who remembers ancient Benefits received from *Nabash*, and pitied his Son who had lost such a Father. What those Benefits were, is uncertain. Some of the *Jews* say he fled to him, when he durst not stay with *Achish*, and he received him kindly. Others that he entertained his Relations, when the King of *Moab*, to whom *David* committed them, slew some of them. But it is most probable, that being an Enemy to *Saul*, who had given him a great Overthrow, he proved a Friend to *David* when he was persecuted by him; and sent him Relief and Assistance, and perhaps offered him his Protection.

And sent to comfort him by the hand of his Servants, for his Father.] According to the present Custom among Princes, who send some of their Courtiers to condole the Loss of those with whom they live in Friendship.

And *David's* Servants came into the Land of the Children of Ammon.] Where they had Audience of *Hanun*, and delivered their Message: Which his Court sinistrously interpreted, as appears by the next Verse.

Ver. 3. And the Princes of the Children of Ammon] Who bare a great Sway in all publick Affairs.

Said unto *Hanun* their Lord, Thinkest thou that *David* doth honour thy Father, that he hath sent Comforters unto thee?] They measured his Affection by their own; who having no Kindness for *David*, imagined he had as little for them.

Hath not *David* rather sent his Servants to search the City, and to spy it out?] Nothing so well meant, but may be ill interpreted; and is wort to be so by Men who love no body but themselves.

To overthrow it.] They persuade him that these Embassadors came only to observe where the City was weakest, and might be most successfully assaulted, and taken.

Ver. 4. Wherefore *Hanun* took *David's* Servants, and shaved off one half of their Beards,] He was not only very credulous, but very ill-

natured; for otherwise, he would have civilly dismissed them, whatsoever his Courtiers suspected; or kept them in an honourable Custody, till the Truth had been discovered. But this was the highest Disgrace that could be put upon them: For all People thought their Hair a great Ornament; and never shaved their Heads or their Beards, but in case of mourning: which was forbid to the *Israelites*, *Levit.* xix. 27. *Deut.* xiv. 1. And therefore when he had caused one half of their Beards to be cut off, they abhorred to cut the other: Which made them look ridiculously. See *Isaiab* xv. 2. *Jerem.* xli. 5.---xlviii. 37. We learn what a foul Disgrace, yea, an heavy Punishment, this was in ancient Times, from *Nicolaus Damascenus*, mentioned by *Stobæus*, *Tit.* 42. who says, that among the *Indians* the King commanded the greatest Offenders to be shaven, *κελεύει κείρασθαι ὡς ἐσχότης τιμωρίας*, as the heaviest Punishment he could inflict upon them. And *Tacitus* saith, that there were few Adulterers among the ancient *Germans*; whose Punishment was left to the Husbands: And they were wont to cut off their Hair, and turn them naked out of doors, and whip them through the Streets. See *Georg. Ritterbusius de Jure Asylorum*, Cap. 10. And at this day, this is the greatest Indignity that can be offered to any Man in *Persia*, to cause his Beard to be shaved off: As *Tavernier* relates in his *Indian Travels*, p. 121. where he tells us the *Sophi* caused an Embassador of *Aureng-Zeb* to be thus used; telling him he was not worthy to wear a Beard, and thereupon commanded it to be shaved off. Which was just like this Act of *Hanun*. And *Aureng-Zeb* most highly repented the Affront that was offered him in the Person of his Embassador, as *David* did this which was offered him in his.

And cut their Garments to the middle, even to their Buttocks, and sent them away.] Long Garments down to the heels were worn in those Countries, especially by honourable Persons: And therefore the King of *Ammon* still put a further Indignity upon them, in cutting their Garments short, even to the middle: Whereby those Parts were exposed which required to be covered. For the *Israelites* did not wear Breeches as we do; so that their long Garments being cut to the Middle, their Nakedness might be seen. See *Isaiab* xx. 4.

Ver. 5. And when they told it unto *David*, he sent to meet them, because they were greatly ashamed.] Therefore he sent, no doubt, Clothes to cover them, together with the following Advice.

And the King said, tarry at *Jericho*] Which was the first Place to which they came in the Land of *Canaan*; and now a private Village, where they might obscure themselves, till they were fit to appear in publick.

Until your Beards be grown, and then return.] For it was a Reproach in that Country to have no Beard. And though it was well known how they came to be deprived of them, yet it was not fit that Persons of their Quality should appear unlike all other Men.

Ver. 6. And when the Children of Ammon saw that they stank before *David*,] They wanted not Intelligence, how heinously *David* repented the barbarous Usage of his Embassadors: Which is expressed



expressed by a Phrase, which signifies that they were become very odious to him. See Gen. xxxiv. 30.

*The Children of Ammon sent and hired the Syrians of Beth-rehob,]* They distrusted their own Strength, and therefore hired Auxiliary Forces of their Neighbours: Particularly those of *Beth-rehob*, which was a City belonging to the *Canaanites*, rather than the *Syrians* (as *Bochart* observes) who were only Borderers upon it.

*And the Syrians of Zoba, twenty thousand Footmen,]* Concerning *Zoba*, see viii. 3.

*And of King Maacab a thousand Men,]* *Maacab* also was a City in *Palestine*, beyond *Jordan*, in the Tribe of *Manasseh*, as *Rehob* was in the Tribe of *Asher* (*Josh.* xiii. 11. xix. 26.) but the *Canaanites* kept them out of the Possession of both, *Josh.* xiii. 13. *Judges* i. 31. Therefore *Bochartus* confutes those who think *Aram-Maacab* was the Country of *Comagena*: For though *Aram* commonly signifies *Syria*, which was divided into many Countries; yet the Scriptures shew these Places were not in *Syria*. But the People of them were called *Syrians*, because they imitated their Manners: As the Woman in the Gospel is called *Syro-Phœnician*, tho' she was a Woman of *Canaan*, *Mat.* xv. 27. *Mark* vii. 26. See his *Phaleg. Lib.* 2. Cap. 6. latter end.

*And of Ishob twelve thousand Men.]* Or, of the Men of *Tob*: A Country unto which *Jephthab* fled from his unkind Brethren. See *Judges* xi. 3.

Ver. 7. *And when David heard of it, he sent Joab and the Host of the mighty Men.]* He did not think it prudent, to stay till they assaulted him in his own County; but went and invaded theirs.

Ver. 8. *And the Children of Ammon came out, and put the battel in array at the entering in of the Gate.]* They drew up their Army either before *Rabbah*, the Metropolis of their Country; or before *Medeba* (in the Borders of it) where their Confederates were pitched, *1 Chron.* xix. 7.

*And the Syrians of Zoba, and of Rehob, and Ishob and Maacab, were by themselves in the Field.]* They kept their Mercenary Forces in the Field, and would not let them come into their Cities.

Ver. 9. *And when Joab saw that the Front of the battel was against him, before and behind,]* In the *Hebrew*, the face of the battel, &c. i. e. they had divided their Forces; the *Syrians* appearing before him, and the *Ammonites* behind him.

*He chose of all the choice Men of Israel, and put them in array against the Syrians.]* He also, like an expert Commander, presently divided his Army into two Bodies; and pick'd out the best Soldiers to engage the *Syrians*; who, it seems, were the strongest, or most valiant.

Ver. 10. *And the rest of the People he delivered into the hand of Abishai his Brother, that he might put them in array against the Children of Ammon.]* He was also an experienced Captain, who seems to have to deal with that Body of the Enemies which was behind them, as *Joab* with those before him.

Ver. 11. *And he said, If the Syrians be too strong for me, then thou shalt help me; but if the Children of Ammon be too strong for thee, then I will come and help thee.]* Send a Detachment,

as they now speak, from the strongest Body, to that which proved weaker.

Ver. 12. *Be of good courage, and let us play the Men, for our People, and for the Cities of our God.]* The Words were not spoken, I suppose, to *Abishai* alone; but to all the Army by their Officers; that they might not be disheartned at the sight of such numerous Forces, as in a manner encompassed them: but be so much the more resolute, for the Preservation of their Country.

*And the LORD do that which seemeth him good.]* If they did their Duty, he trusted God's Providence would favour them: However, it would be some Comfort, that they had done their best.

Ver. 13. *And Joab drew nigh, and the People that were with him, unto the Battel against the Syrians: and they fled before him.]* He did very prudently in assaulting the Mercenary Army first; for they that are hired to fight, generally have a great Care to save themselves; having no regard to the Cause for which they fight.

Ver. 14. *And when the Children of Ammon saw that the Syrians were fled,]* On whom they principally relied.

*Then fled they also before Abishai, and entered into the City.]* They seem not to have struck a Stroke; but provided also for their Safety, in the City near to which their Army was drawn up.

*And Joab returned from the Children of Ammon, and came to Jerusalem.]* Here is no Account of the Number of the Slain, which, I suppose, were few or none, because they did not fight, but flee. The Year also seems to have been so far spent, that it was not a Season fit for laying a Siege to the City. See the next Chapter, ver. 1.

Ver. 15. *And when the Syrians saw that they were smitten before Israel, they gathered themselves together.]* Fearing *David* would fall upon them for assisting his Enemies, they resolved to be beforehand with him; and therefore levied a new Army to invade him.

Ver. 16. *And Hadadezer]* Who was the King of *Aram Zoba*, in *Mesopotamia*.

*Sent and brought out the Syrians that were beyond the River.]* i. e. Beyond *Euphrates*; which was the Bound of his Territories Eastward. See viii. 3.

*And came to Helam.]* A Place, I suppose, on the Borders of *Hadadezer's* Country, Westward.

*And Shobach the Captain of the Host of Hadadezer went before them.]* Commanded both his Forces, and theirs which came to his assistance.

Ver. 17. *And when it was told David, he gathered all Israel together, and passed over Jordan, and came to Helam.]* In this Expedition *David* seems to have commanded his Army, in his own Person.

*And the Syrians set themselves in array against David, and fought with him.]* They seem to have begun the Fight.

Ver. 18. *And the Syrians fled before Israel, and David slew the Men of seven hundred Chariots.]* That is, seven thousand Men, who belonged to those seven hundred Chariots, as it is explained in *1 Chron.* xix. 18.

*And forty thousand Horsemen.]* In that Place of the *Chronicles* it is said forty thousand Footmen. Which



Which teaches us how to explain the Words here; viz. that they were mixed together, Horse and Foot: And that in all there were slain forty thousand of them, part Horsemen, and part Footmen.

*And smote Shobach the Captain of their Host, who died there.]* Was slain upon the spot (as we speak) being a valiant Man, who chose to be killed, rather than fly.

Ver. 19. *And when all the Kings that were Servants of Hadadezer saw that they were smitten before Israel,]* There were several petty Kings that were subject to Hadadezer; who was the most powerful Prince thereabout.

*They made peace with Israel, and served them.]* As, I suppose, Hadadezer himself also did: whereby God fulfilled his Promise to Abraham (which was renewed to Joshua) of enlarging the Dominion of his Posterity, as far as Euphrates. See Gen. xv. 18.-----Josh. i. 2, 3, 4.

*So the Syrians feared to help the Children of Ammon any more.]* But left them to shift for themselves: Inasmuch that, as it follows, David conquered their Country.

## CHAP. XI.

Verse 1. **A**ND it came to pass, that after the Year was expired,] In the Hebrew, at the return of the Year: That is, in the Spring-time, he sent forth his Armies to do that which he could not do in the Conclusion of the former Year; when the Season was not fit for Action, as I observed upon the 15th Verse of the foregoing Chapter. For the Year ending with the Month *Nisan*, the next Year began with the Month *Nisan*: Which was a fit Time to march into the Field to make War; and so commonly employed, that it seems to have had its Name (as Bochartus observes) from *Nisim*: Which signifies military Ensigns, which were wont to be advanced in that Month. And, in like manner, the Month we call *March* had its Name among the Romans from *Mars*, their God of War; because then they began their Military Expeditions. See his *Hierozycon*, P. 1. Lib. 2. Cap. 50.

*At the time that Kings go forth to battel,]* These Words *to battel*, are added for Explication sake: But they are not in the Hebrew; in which Language *to go forth* signifies to go forth to War. See Gen. x. 11. Isa. xlii. 13. Zach. xiv. 3. and other places mentioned by the same great Man, P. 2. Lib. 4. Cap. 2.

*That David sent Joab and his Servants with him, and all Israel;]* All his Soldiers.

*And they destroyed the Children of Ammon.]* Laid waste their Country, and killed all the People they could meet with.

*And besieged Rabbah.]* The Royal City of the Ammonites, Deut. iii. 11.

*But David tarried still at Jerusalem.]* He committed the Care of this War to Joab, and did not himself go out to fight: As he had done before against Hadadezer.

Ver. 2. *And it came to pass in an Evening-tide,]* In the Afternoon, when the Sun was declining.

*That David rose from his Bed,]* Where he had lain down to sleep, in the Heat of the

Day; as the manner was in those Countries, iv. 5.

*And walked upon the Roof of his House.]* To take the fresh Air: For their Roofs were flat. See Deut. xxii. 8.

*And from the Roof he saw a Woman washing her self,]* In her Garden, where she bathed; or in her Chamber, the Casements being open. The first is most probable: And that she washed to cleanse her self from such legal Impurities as are mentioned Levit. xv. 19. which is more likely, than that she did it for Pleasure, or merely to cool her self in a hot Day, as some understand it. The 4th Verse sufficiently explains this Matter.

*And the Woman was very beautiful to look upon.]* Of a delicate Shape, and lovely Countenance and Complexion. Thus Jupiter is said to have seen Proserpina washing her self, and exposing her whole Body to his View: Which inflamed his Lust after her;

Λομμένης ὅλον εἶδ' ἐδέχκετο Περσεφονείης.

As Nonnus hath it in his *Dionys*. See Spanbe-  
mius ad Vers. 53. Callim. Hymn. in *Lavacrum*  
*Palladis*.

Ver. 3. *And David sent and enquired after her.]* That if she was a single Woman, he might take her for his Wife.

*And one said, Is not this Bathsheba the Daughter of Eliam, the Wife of Uriah the Hittite?]* This seems to be the Answer of him who was sent to enquire about her, that he need not trouble himself any farther, for she was another Man's Wife. Who is called an *Hittite*, because he was so by Nation, but a Profelyte to the Jewish Religion: And for his Valour made one of the King's Guard among the *Cerethites* and the *Peletites*; which was the Reason, perhaps, that he had a House so near the King's.

Ver. 4. *And David sent Messengers to her, and took her.]* Notwithstanding he was informed, she was another Man's Wife, he sent Messengers to her to invite her to his Palace; into which he received her. This was a very great Crime, being done deliberately, and advisedly: And is here recorded for several great Ends and Purposes. First, that the best Men may be sensible, in what need they stand continually of the Divine Assistance: Which therefore they ought to pray for earnestly; and watch as well as pray, that they fall not into Temptation. And we should all learn from thence, that they are but Men whose Examples are set before us; and therefore they must live by Rule, and not merely by Example. And that we ought to take heed of Sloth and Idleness; being always well employed, and not giving our selves liberty to gaze upon Temptations.

*And she came in unto him, and lay with him (for she was purified from her Uncleaness)]* Which shows the Reason why she conceived so quickly. See Grotius.

*And she returned to her House.]* Early in the Morning, I suppose, that she might not be discovered. The *Talmudists* are so desirous to excuse their Ancestors from all Blemishes, that they say David committed no Sin in lying with Bathsheba; but only in causing Uriah to be killed. For, when any Man went to war, he gave



gave his Wife; they pretend, a Bill of Divorce: So that if he was killed in the War, it was not Adultery in another Man, who lay with her, as soon as the Bill was given. This monstrous Opinion is seriously maintained by *R. Samuel Laniado* against *Abarbinel*; who honestly acknowledges, and strenuously proves, *David* was guilty of a very foul Adultery: Which was the more criminal, because it was with the Wife of a faithful Servant of his, who then served him in his Wars, See *Buxtorf de Sponsal. & Divort.* Sect. 43, &c. and *Selden* in his *Uxor Hæbraica*, Lib. 3. Cap. 19. p. 441.

Ver. 5. *And the Woman conceived, and sent and told David, saying, I am with child.*] She was afraid of Infamy, and perhaps of the Severity of her Husband; who might cause her to be stoned: And therefore prays *David* to consult her Honour, and her Safety.

Ver. 6. *And David sent unto Joab, saying, Send me Uriah the Hittite. And Joab sent Uriah to David.*] With an Account of the State of the War; which *David* it's likely desir'd.

Ver. 7. *And when Uriah was come unto him, David demanded of him how Joab, and how the People did, and how the War prospered.*] Some think (particularly *P. Martyr*) that these were such ordinary Questions, as betrayed this was not the Business for which he commanded him to be sent: But the last Words import, that after the common Questions of *Joab's* and the People's Health, he enquired how the Siege went on, what Approaches they had made to the City; what Hopes they had of taking it; in what time; with other things of like nature, which were of importance.

Ver. 8. *And David said, Go down to thy House and wash thy Feet.*] As the manner of Travellers was; this being a great Refreshment after their Journey.

*And Uriah departed out of the King's House, and there followed him a Mess of Meat from the King.*] In token of his extraordinary Favour and Kindness to him; and that, eating freely of good Cheer, he might be the more desirous to enjoy the Company of his Wife. *Abarbinel* thinks this was a very sinful Contrivance of *David*, to endeavour to have his Child thought the Child of *Uriah*: Or, at least, it was very much below his Dignity, he thinks, to have one of his own Progeny pass for an ordinary Man.

Ver. 9. *But Uriah slept at the Door of the King's House, with the Servants of his Lord, and went not down to his House.*] Like a true Soldier, he lay all night in the Guard-chamber (with the *Gerethites* and *Peletites*) and not with his Wife. By which means God's Providence so ordered it, that the Crime of this Prince (who had been so admirably instructed in his Duty) should not be concealed, as he intended.

Ver. 10. *And when they had told David, saying, Uriah went not down to his House,*] They that carried the Mess of Meat after him, gave *David* this Information.

*David said unto Uriah, Camest thou not from thy Journey? wherefore then didst thou not go down to thine House?*] He still pretended Kindness to him, and great Care of him; telling him he expected no Service of him here, especially after a Journey.

Ver. 11. *And Uriah said unto David, the Ark, and Israel, and Judah, abide in Tents,*] It seems they still continued the Custom which we read of, 1 Sam. iv. 4. of carrying the Ark into the Field, as a Token of the Divine Presence with them, and Favour to them: And that they might consult the Divine Majesty in any difficult Cases.

*And my Lord Joab, and the Servants of my Lord, are encamped in the open Field;*] Where they lay upon the ground in their Tents. It is an idle Conceit of *Laniado*, before-mentioned, that *Uriah* was guilty of Treason, in calling *Joab*; *My Lord*; in the presence of *David*: For which he pretends *David* might lawfully put him to death.

*Shall I then go unto my House, to eat and to drink, and to lie with my Wife? as thou livest, and as thy Soul liveth, I will not do this thing.*] These are not two Oaths, but the Repetition of the same: Which was pronounced with such vehemence, that *David's* Heart, it might have been expected, should have been deeply touched, to think how he had abused so brave a Man: And made him reflect how vilely he indulged himself in sinful Pleasure, whilst this Man and the rest gloriously endured all manner of Hardships; and refused the most innocent Pleasure, for the Service of their Country: But he was so corrupted for the present, that he was troubled to find *Uriah* so true a Soldier.

Ver. 12. *And David said to Uriah, Tarry here to-day also, and to-morrow I will let thee depart. So Uriah abode in Jerusalem that day, and the morrow.*] He still pretended more Kindness to him, in giving him time to rest himself after his Journey; and, perhaps, pretended also, that he himself could not sooner finish his Dispatches.

Ver. 13. *And when David had called him,*] Invited him to Supper, the Night before he went away.

*He did eat and drink before him, and he made him drunk: and at Even he went out to lie on his Bed, with the Servants of his Lord, and went not down to his House.*] The Hebrew Word doth not certainly signify, that he was quite drunk; but that he drank so much, that he was very merry. However *Plutarch* observes, that brave Men, even when they have drunk too much, preserve their Modesty and Gravity: Just as good Horses are orderly, even when their Reins are let loose. This was an addition to *David's* Sin, that he endeavoured to intoxicate *Uriah*, and thereby make him forget his Oath before-mentioned.

Ver. 14. *And it came to pass in the Morning, that David wrote a Letter to Joab, and sent it by the hand of Uriah.*] Who, if he suspected any thing of the Adultery, as some think he did, (and therefore resolving that it should be discovered, would not go home to his Wife) yet was so trusty a Servant, he would not open the Letter, to find what was in it.

Ver. 15. *And he wrote in the Letter, saying, Set Uriah in the Fore-front of the hottest Battle, and retire ye from him, that he may be smitten, and die.*] Thus one Sin begets many; depriving Men of the use of their Understanding. For he might better, as *Abarbinel* observes, have told *Uriah* the truth, and begged his pardon; and obliged him to stay with him 'till the Child was



born, and then secretly put it out to nurse: Whereby the matter might have been so managed; that it should not have been commonly divulged, or not certainly believed. But his Eyes were blinded; and his very Nature was altered, and become base and degenerate; now he had given himself up to Sensuality. For he that formerly spared Saul, when he could have destroyed him, and have known who did it; seeks the Death of a faithful Servant after a most unworthy manner.

Ver. 16. *And it came to pass when Joab observed the City, that he assigned Uriah to a Place where valiant Men were.*] Ordered him to attack a Part of the City, which he knew would be valiantly defended: Or, to make a good Breach, out of which the best Men they had in the City would issue out against them. Joab was herein also deeply guilty, in complying with such a Command: Unless we suppose, that he might imagine Uriah had committed some great Crime; for which David, consulting Uriah's Honour, would not punish him openly.

Ver. 17. *And the Men of the City went out, and fought with Joab:*] They seem to have made a Sally out of the City upon the Israelites; when they saw they were preparing for an Assault.

*And there fell some of the People of the Servants of David, and Uriah the Hittite died also.*] This was a further Aggravation of David's Sin, that he not only exposed an innocent and a valiant faithful Servant to be killed, but other Persons also with him, who might have lived to do good Service to their Country: For it is not to be imagined, that one Person alone was set in the Fore-front, where the Service was hottest (as David ordered, ver. 15.) but there was a Party of stout Men with Uriah, whom he led on.

Ver. 18. *Then Joab sent and told David all things concerning the War:*] How it was managed, and what ill Success they had in one Engagement.

Ver. 19. *And charged the Messenger, saying, When thou hast made an end of telling the Matters of the War unto the King.*] Especially this last Action.

Ver. 20. *And if so be the King's Wrath arise, and he say unto thee, wherefore approached ye so nigh unto the City when he did fight? knew ye not that they would shoot from the Wall?*] All good Kings are careful to preserve their Subjects; and therefore it must be supposed David would be angry when he heard of this Loss; till he reflected upon the Reason, why they were exposed to such Danger.

Ver. 21. *Who smote Abimelech the Son of Jerobobeth?*] These are still the Words the King might be supposed to say; How came Abimelech to lose his Life? Was it not by venturing too near the Wall? He calls him the Son of Jerobobeth, who in the Book of Judges is called the Son of Jerubaal: Of which see upon the second Chapter of this Book, ver. 8.

*Did not a Woman cast a piece of a Millstone upon him from the Wall, that he died in Thebez? Why went ye so nigh the Wall?*] Having such an Example, to make you more cautious.

*Then say, Thy Servant Uriah the Hittite is dead also.*] Which he knew would soon pacify him.

Ver. 22. *So the Messenger went, and came and*

*shewed David all that Joab had sent him for.*] The whole Process of the War hitherto, but more particularly the Event of the last Engagement, as it here follows.

Ver. 23. *And the Messenger said unto David, Surely the Men prevailed against us, and came out unto us into the Field, and we were upon them even unto the entering of the Gate.*] The Account he gives of the last Action is this: That the Ammonites made a Sally, and were too hard for the Israelites; whom they put into some disorder; but they, plucking up their Courage, rallied again; and beat the Ammonites back, following them to the very Gate of their City.

Ver. 24. *And the Shooters shot from off the Wall upon thy Servants, and some of the King's Servants be dead, and thy Servant Uriah the Hittite is dead also.*] These Shooters were either Archers, or such as managed the Machines (which perhaps they had in these Days, as they had afterwards among the Romans) out of which they shot Arrows and Stones. Vitruvius says, that out of their Catapultæ and Scorpiones they shot Arrows, and out of their Balistæ they shot Stones. Others say the quite contrary, as Goteschalchus Stewechius shews in his learned Commentary upon the fourth Book of Vegetius, L. De Re Militari, p. 446, &c.

Ver. 25. *Then David said unto the Messenger, Thus shalt thou say unto Joab, let not this thing displease thee:*] That is, be not disheartened by this Loss. David shewed no sign of Displeasure, expecting to hear the News he desired of Uriah's Death.

*For the Sword devoureth one as well as another:*] Makes no distinction between good and bad.

*Make thy battel more strong against the City, and overthrow it;*] He would have this Defeat make them more resolute, to assault the City with greater force, till they were Masters of it.

*And encourage thou him.*] i. e. Joab and his Soldiery.

Ver. 26. *And when the Wife of Uriah heard that her Husband was dead, she mourned for her Husband.*] But not long: For then David could not have taken her soon enough into his House, to cover his Adultery. The common time was seven Days, 1 Sam. xxxi. 7.

Ver. 27. *And when the Mourning was past, David sent, and fet her to his House, and she became his Wife, and bare him a Son: but the thing that David had done, displeased the LORD.*] This whole Business was evil in the eyes of God (as the Words are in the Hebrew) not only his Adultery, and the Murder of Uriah, but also his taking Bathsheba to his Wife. For according to the Hebrew Doctors, it was utterly unlawful for any Man to marry the Wife of one whom he had defiled. Which hath made some of the Jews so laborious to excuse David from the Crime of Adultery. For Laniado himself acknowledges, that if David had committed Adultery with Bathsheba, she had been perpetually prohibited, and unlawful to him, as his Words are. But tho' this ought not to have been done, yet, being done, the Marriage held good; and the Children he afterwards had by her were legitimate. See Buxtorf. de Sponsalibus & Divortis, Sect. 43.



C H A P. XII.

Verse 1. **A**ND the LORD sent Nathan unto David:] To awaken him out of his Sleep; and gave him a sight of his Sins.

*And he came unto him, and said unto him, There were two Men in one City; the one rich, and the other poor.]* This was a prudent and respectful way of awakening David, by an apposite Parable: Which was so managed, that the Prophet did not condemn David, but made him condemn himself. And many have very pertinently observed from hence, that there is never more use of Wisdom and Discretion, than in the Contrivance of Reprehension; especially of Princes and great Persons: Whom the Ministers of Christ ought to admonish and reprove in an humble and reverend Representation of their Sins to them, not with rude Exprobations of them, and Declamations against them. It is not necessary to apply every word of this Parable to David's Case (as the beginning of it is exactly fitted) because in Parables several things are added, which serve only to make them decorous and handsome. Yet *Abarbinel* (as I shall shew in the Conclusion of it) hath endeavoured to give an account of every part of it.

Ver. 2. *And the rich Man had exceeding many Flocks and Herds:]* As David had many Wives and Concubines, with which he might have been well satisfied.

Ver. 3. *But the poor Man had nothing, save only one little Ewe-lamb,]* Perhaps *Uriah* had only one Wife, with whom he contented himself; or rather was highly pleased: She being mild and gentle as a Lamb.

*Which he had bought and nourished up:]* They frequently purchased their Wives in those days; giving to their Parents a Sum of Money for them. See *Selden*; Lib. 2. *De Uxore Hebr.* Cap. 20.

*And it grew up together with him, and with his Children; it did eat of his own Meat, and drank of his own Cup, and lay in his Bosom; and was unto him as a Daughter.]* That is, was exceeding dear to him, and beloved by him. This is a Resemblance not unlike the Truth, unto those who understand how fond many Persons were anciently, not only of Lambs, but of several other Creatures: Which they suffered to eat with them at their Tables, and to lie with them in their Beds; as *Bochartus* shews in his *Hiero-zoicon*, P. 1. Lib. 2. Cap. 43.

Ver. 4. *And there came a Traveller to the rich Man,]* This may be applied to David's stragling Affection, which he suffered to wander from his own home, and to covet another Man's Wife. The Jewish Doctors say, it represents that which they call *Yetzer bara*, the evil Disposition, or Desire that is in us, which must be diligently watched and observed, when we feel its Motions. For they have this ingenious Observation concerning it, in *Bereschit Rabba*, and other Books. *In the Beginning it is but a Traveller; but in time it becomes a Guest; and in conclusion, is the Master of the House.* For he, say they, who is called a Traveller in the beginning of this Verse, is called *Isch*, a Man, in the conclusion of it.

*And he spared to take of his own Flock, and his own Herd, to dress for the wayfaring Man that*

*was come to him,]* Wherewith he might have satisfied his Appetite.

*But took the poor Man's Lamb, and dressed it for the Man that was come to him.]* He touches not in this Parable upon the Murder, for that was committed to cover the Adultery, which led the way to the other Crime. And *Abarbinel* gives a Reason why it is not mentioned in his Explication of the Parable: Which is this. The rich Man, saith he, plainly signifies David; his Flocks and Herds; David's Wives and Concubines: The poor Man represents *Uriah*, who, he thinks, was a Widower, and had several Children alive by a former Wife, when he married *Bathsheba*. Whom he compares to a Lamb which he bought, because he solemnly espoused her: And with tender Affection he cherished her, and she grew up with him, and with his Children, which he had by his former Wife. This Lamb being taken by the rich Man from the poor, to gratify a wanton Appetite, signifies David's taking *Bathsheba* and lying with her. And it would have made the Resemblance more compleat, if he had added, that the rich Man killed the poor Man, from whom he took the Lamb. But this is omitted, *Abarbinel* thinks, in the Parable, that David might not readily apprehend Nathan's Meaning; and so be induced unawares to pronounce a Sentence of Condemnation upon himself. And then he had a fitt Opportunity to shew him, that if the rich Man, who took away the poor Man's Lamb, deserved Death, according to his own Judgment, how much more did he deserve it, who had not only taken another Man's Wife; but also caused him to be slain by the Enemies of Israel?

Ver. 5. *And David's Anger was greatly kindled against the Man; and he said, As the LORD liveth, the Man that hath done this thing, shall surely die.]* Punishments sometimes extended beyond the Law, because of the great Atrocity of the Crime.

Ver. 6. *And he shall restore the Lamb four-fold,]* This was agreeable to the Law, *Exod.* xxii. 1.

*Because he did this thing, and because he had no pity.]* Because he took away the Lamb, he condemned him to make restitution four-fold: And because he had no pity (it being his only Lamb) he condemned him to die. *Kimchi* will have it, that the Word signifies twice four-fold; because it is in their dual Number: So that this Punishment also is beyond the Law. But all the ancient Interpreters are against him. But the Jews here observe, that these Words were ominous: So many of David's Sons perishing, as he said the rich Man should restore Lambs, viz. the Child he had by *Bathsheba*, *Amnon*, *Absalom*, and *Adonijah*. See *Bochartus* in his *Hieroz.* P. 1. Lib. 2. Cap. 40.

Ver. 7. *And Nathan said unto David, Thou art the Man.]* Who had pronounced a dreadful Sentence against himself. Tho' Reproofs of Men in Authority are to be managed very mannerly, as to the Form, wherein they are delivered; yet as to the matter they are to be plain and downright; so that they may be made sensible of their Guilt.

*Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, I anointed thee King over Israel, and delivered thee out of*



the hand of Saul.] Who sought to hinder his Advancement to the Kingdom, by destroying him. Thus he aggravates David's Sin, from the Obligations he had to God; who had preferred him to the highest Dignity, when he was in a low, and sometimes a desperate Condition.

Ver. 8. *And I gave thee thy Master's House,]* His Kingdom.

*And thy Master's Wives into thy Bosom,]* For the Wives of a King went along with his Lands and Goods unto his Successor: It being unlawful for the Widow of a King to be Wife to any but a King; as appears by the Story of *Adonijah*. But this doth not signify that David married any of them; but only that they were delivered into his Possession, as all other Things belonging unto *Saul* were. So *Maimonides*: And more than this, the Jewish Doctors say, no Subject might have so much as the Horse of the King, no more than his Scepter and Crown: Much less his Widow, or one divorced by him, who was to remain a Widow to the day of her Death. So the same *Maimonides*: The Wife of a King is to be married to none else; for even the King cannot legally marry the Widow of his Predecessor, or one divorced by him. See *Selden*, Lib. 1. *De Uxore Hebr.* Cap. 10. and *Carpzovius* upon *Schickard's Jus Regium*, p. 441. But there are those, who, to avoid all Controversy about this Matter, interpret the Word *Nase*, not *Wives*, but meer *Women* belonging unto *Saul*.

*And gave thee the House of Israel and of Judah;]* Dominion over all the twelve Tribes.

*And if that had been too little, I would moreover have given thee such and such things.]* He need but have asked, and God would have given him all that he could reasonably desire: But he ought not to have taken what he pleased himself. The Jews refer this to the Wives he would have given him: And gather from hence, that their Kings might have eighteen Wives, and no more. See upon *Deut.* xvii. 17. But it is evident these Words *such and such things*, do not signify a certain Number of any thing, but indefinitely other Benefits of any kind: As *Theod. Blackspan* observes out of many like Places, particularly *Isaiab* vii. 20. See his *Disput.* 4. N. 3.

Ver. 9. *Wherefore hast thou despised the Commandment of the LORD, to do evil in his sight?]* These Words, and David's own Confession (ver. 13.) might have ashamed the *Talmudists*, one would think, from framing Excuses for David's Sin, and absolving him from any Guilt. *Bartoloccius* hath given a large Account of their lewd Prevarication in this matter in his *Kirjath Sepher*, Tom. 2. pag. 102, 103, &c.

*Thou hast killed Uriah the Hittite with the Sword,]* For he contrived his Death, which was as bad as if he had killed him himself.

*And hast taken his Wife to be thy Wife.]* After he had first committed Adultery with her.

*And hath slain him with the Sword of the Children of Ammon.]* This highly aggravated his Crime, as *Abarbinel* observes, that he caused him to be slain by the professed Enemies of God; who triumphed in the Slaughter of so great a Man. And in this *Laniado* himself confesses David sinned, though in nothing else.

Ver. 10. *Now therefore the Sword shall never depart from thine House;]* That is, as long as he

lived, there should be Slaughters in his Family. Which was fulfilled in the violent Death of his Children *Ammon* and *Absalom*, and (about the Time of his Death) *Adonijah*.

*Because thou hast despised me, and hast taken the Wife of Uriah the Hittite to be thy Wife.]* Which, it appears by this Repetition, was a very great Offence: But not greater than his Adultery, as *Procopius Gazæus* thinks it was.

Ver. 11. *Thus saith the LORD, behold, I will raise up evil against thee, out of thine own House,]* That is, his own Family. Which was notoriously fulfilled in *Absalom's* Conspiracy against him.

*And I will take thy Wives before thine eyes, and give them unto thy Neighbour; and he shall lie with thy Wives in the sight of this Sun.]* For *Absalom* had a Tent spread in the House-top, and there went in unto them, xvi. 21, 22. Which is said to be done before David's eyes; because, though he did not see it, yet it was done so publickly that he could not but know it, and yet was not able to hinder it.

Ver. 12. *For thou didst it secretly, but I will do this thing before all Israel, and before the Sun.]* For it was notorious to all, how David fled in haste from his Son, and left his Concubines behind him, xv. 14, 15, 16.

Ver. 13. *And David said unto Nathan, I have sinned against the LORD:]* This Confession was made in a few Words: But, no doubt, with many Sobs, and great Grief, Compunction and Contrition of Heart.

*And Nathan said unto David,]* Not presently, but after he had bewailed his Sin so bitterly, that his Repentance appeared to be hearty.

*The LORD also hath put away thy Sin, thou shalt not die.]* He was guilty of Death upon a double account; as an Adulterer, and as a Murderer: As *Procopius Gazæus* observes. But upon his Repentance, the Prophet pronounces an Absolution to him, thus far; that he should be pardoned the Guilt, and Part of the Punishment. That is, he should not perish eternally (as *Rasi* and others interpret the Words, *thou shalt not die*) nor here suffer the Death he had deserved. For though when God gave them a King like other Nations, he did not intend that he should be above all Law, and not be bound to the Laws he himself had given (as *Abarbinel* observes) yet he was not subject to the Punishment of the Law, which no Magistrate could inflict, because he was the Supreme: But God reserved his Punishment to himself, and threatens to inflict it when inferiour Officers could not. Which Threatning did not take away from him the Power of pardoning and releasing the Punishment, but he left that intire to himself, and here uses it. But in such a manner, that he freed David only from the Punishment of Death, and the Loss of his Kingdom: Otherwise he was to suffer a great many, and fore Calamities, as long as he lived. See *J. Benedict.* *Carpzovius* upon *Schickard's Jus Regium*, Cap. 2. *Theor.* 7. p. 137. Whereby it appears how false the Doctrine of the *Talmudists* is concerning the Power of the great *Sanhedrin*, who they say had Power to scourge their Kings, &c. Which we never find was attempted, tho' *Saul* and *David*, and especially *Manasseh*, committed most heinous Sins, which deserved severe Correction.

Ver.



Ver. 14. *Howbeit, because by this Deed thou hast given great occasion to the Enemies of the LORD to blaspheme, the Child also that is born unto thee, shall surely die.*] This was an additional Punishment, to be inflicted presently: Because his Sin was highly aggravated, in that the Nations about them might thereby be tempted to have him and his Divine Law in great contempt; which they saw no more regarded by the best Men that professed it. Or, they might blaspheme God, as a Respector of Persons, who had rejected *Saul*, and yet kept *David* on the Throne, who had done worse than he. Or, the *Ammonites* perhaps insulted over *Israel* and their God, when they had killed *Uriah* and others with him. Yet *Procopius Gazæus* here well observes, there was some Mercy mixed with this Punishment; for if the Child had lived, it would have been a standing Monument of his Adultery. And therefore it may be thought, that in favour of *David* God took him away, that he might remove his Reproach.

But this Verse suggests a wonderful thing to us, that *David* remained many Months insensible of what he had done, (so bewitching is sensual Pleasure;) for the Child begotten in Adultery was born before *Nathan* came to rouse him out of his Lethargy.

Ver. 15. *And Nathan departed unto his House: And the Lord struck the Child that Uriah's Wife bare unto David, and it was very sick.*] Of some sudden sore Distemper; which appeared at first, as if it were mortal.

Ver. 16. *David therefore besought the LORD for the Child:*] He thought the Threatning might not be absolute: The Will of God being not always manifested intirely at once, but he reserves still something to himself. As when he commanded *Abraham* to offer his Son; and when he told *Hezekiah* he should die.

*And David fasted, and went in,*] To his Closet, I suppose, or some Place of Retirement.

*And lay all night upon the Earth,*] Humbling himself greatly for his Sin, which had deserved this, and far forer Punishment. *Salvian* (in his second Book, *De Gubern. Dei*) describes this admirably. He put off his Purple, saith he, threw away his Royal Ornaments, laid down his Diadem, wholly stripped himself of his Kingship, and appeared as a Penitent, in a squalid, rueful Garb, fasting, lying on the ground, confessing, mourning, repenting, deprecating, &c. and yet with all this Humiliation and Compunction, he could not obtain a Revocation of this Punishment. By this, and the Story of *Absalom*, it appears that *David* was a great Lover of his Children; many of which proved great Afflictions to him.

Ver. 17. *And the Elders of his House*] The principal Officers belonging to the Court.

*Arose, and went to him to raise him up from the Earth:*] By their earnest Entreaties, to have a care of his own Health.

*But he would not, neither did he eat Bread with them.*] As he was wont to do at other times, when the principal Persons of the Court sat at Table with him. But it is not to be thought, that *David* eat nothing all the time the Child was sick; but only after he began to despair of his Life: Or perhaps, all the time he eat no-

thing 'till the Evening; and then abstained from all delicate Food; and contented himself with coarser Fare.

Ver. 18. *And it came to pass, that on the seventh day, the Child died:*] Either the seventh Day after its Birth, before it was circumcised; or the seventh after it fell sick. This was the first Beginning of the Divine Animadversion upon him (as *Salvian* speaks) *Fuit utique primum, sed non solum*, it was indeed the First, but not the Alone: For there followed a long Train of exceeding great Troubles.

*And the Servants of David feared to tell him the Child was dead: for they said, Behold, while the Child was yet alive we spake unto him, and he would not hearken unto our Voice; how will he then vex himself, if we tell him the Child is dead?*] Thus they whispered and reasoned among themselves; so that he might not hear them, as appears by the next Verse.

Ver. 19. *And when David saw that his Servants whispered, David perceived that the Child was dead:*] He guessed what the matter was.

*Therefore David said unto his Servants, Is the Child dead? And they said, He is dead.*] They would not acquaint him with it abruptly; for fear he should fall into too great a Passion.

Ver. 20. *Then David rose up from the Earth, and washed, and anointed himself, and changed his Apparel,*] Put off the Habit of a Mourner, and prepared himself decently to appear before God. For it is certain the *Jews* were wont to wash before they went into the House of God, either their whole Body, or their Hands; which was usual among the *Gentiles* also. And some have imagined the *Jews* learnt it from them; because we find no mention of it, as they say, 'till the Time of *Judith*, xii. 7. See *Dr. Spencer, Dissert. 3. Cap. 2. Sect. 11.* But that is a Mistake; it being mentioned not only here in this Place, but in the Book of *Psalms*, xxvi. 6. For God having anciently commanded them to wash themselves, before they appeared in his Presence at Mount *Sinai*, *Exod. xx. 20.* they thence, it is likely, concluded it was fit to prepare themselves for all their holy Assemblies, after the same manner.

*And came into the House of the LORD, and worshipped.*] This was done like a truly good Man, who before he would go to his own House, went to God's; and there gave him Thanks, we may suppose, for the Pardon of his Sin; and not cutting him off, as he had done his Child. He acknowledged also the Justice of God, and did not complain of his Severity. He submitted to his holy Will, and beseeched him, perhaps, that the remaining Afflictions might be moderated, and made profitable to him.

*Then he came to his own House, and when he required, they set Bread before him, and he did eat.*] I suppose he was in some retired Room of his own House, where he lay upon the Earth mourning, and would not eat: From whence he would not remove to any other part of it, 'till he had been first at the House of God, and there worshipped.

Ver. 21. *Then said his Servants to him, What is this that thou hast done? Thou didst fast and weep for the Child when he was alive; but when the Child was dead, thou didst rise and eat Bread.*]

His



His great Officers, who sat at the Table with him, I suppose said this.

Ver. 22. *And he said, While the Child was yet alive, I fasted and wept, for I said, who can tell whether God will be gracious unto me, that the Child may live ?*] They thought him preposterous, in mourning while the Child was alive, and chearing up himself when it was dead. But he shews what Reason he had for both : It being possible God might be so kind as to reverse the Sentence of Death, which he had pronounced against the Child, upon *David's* Humiliation, Repentance, and earnest Prayer to him for Mercy.

Ver. 23. *But now he is dead, wherefore should I fast ? Can I bring him back again ? I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me.*] But now God's Will being declared to be absolute, it was in vain to solícite for the Child's Life : which he could not hope to see restored by Fasting and Prayer, or any other means. But he must rather prepare to go to it, than think of bringing it back to him. *Maimonides* says, that they did not lament Infants, who died before they were *thirty* Days old ; but carried them in their Arms to the Grave, with one Woman and two Men to attend them : Without saying the usual Prayers over them, or the Consolations for Mourners. But if an Infant was above *thirty* Days old when he died, they carried him out on a small Bier, and stood over him in order, and said the Prayers and Consolations. If he was a Year old, then he was carried out upon a Bed. This Custom *Gierus* thinks *David* followed, in making no Mourning for his Child, when it was dead : Though there is no ground to think such Customs as *Maimonides* describes, were used in these early Days. See *L. De Luctu Ebræorum*, Cap. 3.

Ver. 24. *And David comforted Bathsheba his Wife,*] Who no doubt was deeply afflicted for the Loss of her Child : Which was a strong Bond while it lived, to tie *David's* Affection to her ; but being dead, she might fear he would no longer have any Concern for her : But, perhaps, divorce her, as having been the Occasion of great Evil to him. It is observable, that there is not one word said to *Bathsheba* in all this Relation, either concerning her Guilt, or her Punishment. She was punished, I suppose, in the Calamities that befel *David* : Who enticed her, not she him, to commit the foul Sin of Adultery ; and was innocent in the Murder of *Uriah*.

*And went in unto her, and lay with her ;*] Which it was not lawful to do, as *Maimonides* observes, while the Days of Mourning lasted : For then they might not so much as marry, tho' they did not lie together. But those Days being ended, he enjoyed her Company. The same *Gierus* hath collected a great deal to this purpose, in the forenamed Book, Cap. 21.

*And she bare him a Son, and called his Name Solomon ;*] Some think his Mother first gave him this Name as soon as he was born.

*And the LORD loved him.*] As the LORD told him, it is likely, by *Nathan* the Prophet : Who comforted him, after his great Humiliation, with this good Hope, that notwithstanding his Sin, God would have a Kindness for this Son, and make him very famous. Such is the

wonderful Goodness of God to truly penitent Sinners ; who testify the Sincerity of their Repentance, by humble Submission to whatsoever Punishments God thinks fit to inflict upon them (as *David* did to the Death of the former Child) and thereby incline the divine Goodness to shew further Mercy to them.

Ver. 25. *And he sent by the hand of Nathan the Prophet, and called his Name Jedidiah,*] But *David* hereupon sent to give his Child another Name ; signifying the Love which he was assured God had to him. But the Scripture never calls him by this Name ; but always *Solomon* : Which Name the People loved, because he built the House of the LORD in peaceable Times.

*Because of the LORD.*] Because he had so graciously declared his Love to him. For the Name imports, as is noted in the Margin of the Bible, *beloved of the LORD*.

*Victorinus Strigelius* translates the first Words of this Verse thus, *Tradidit eum in manum Nathan, &c.* He committed him to the Hand of *Nathan* the Prophet ; that he might educate him, and bring him up in Piety, and in the Knowledge of all things necessary for a Prince to be acquainted withal. For the most excellent Natures are apt to err in many things (as he observes) without Learning ; and therefore though *Hercules* had a very great Genius, yet he was put into the hands of learned Men to instruct him ; as appears by the Verses of *Theocritus*, which recite his Masters. Thus *Alexander* was bred up by *Aristotle* in all manner of Learning : And if *Constantine*, together with his Piety, had not been furnished with a great deal of Knowledge, he could not have managed the Cause of Christ against the *Arians* so well as he did in the Council of Bishops.

Ver. 26. *And Joab fought against Rabbah of the Children of Ammon, and took the City.*] That part of the City where the Royal Palace was, which lay upon the Water that ran by the City, as the next Verse seems to interpret it. It is not to be imagined, that *Joab* continued the Siege so long, as till *David* had two Children by *Bathsheba* : But this was done soon after the Death of *Uriah*, when *David* commanded them to make their Assault stronger against the City, xi. 25.

Ver. 27. *And Joab sent Messengers to David, and said, I have fought against Rabbah, and have taken the City of Waters.*] That part of this City which lay upon the Water : The other part, which was the Heart of the City, being yet untaken. But it being supplied with Water from this part, of which *Joab* had got possession, it could not hold out long, but would be forced to surrender, because *Joab* cut off their Water from them. So *Josephus* understood it, τῶν ὑδάτων αὐτῆς ἀπολειμνόμενης, Lib. 7. Cap. 7. And thus some learned Men translate the last Words of this Verse, by adding the Particle *Mem* before *Eth*, *he took from the City the Waters*.

Ver. 28. *Now therefore gather the rest of the People together, and encamp against the City, and take it ; lest I take the City, and it be called by my Name.*] As from the Conquest of *Africa*, *Scipio* was called *Africanus*. By this it appears, that though *Joab* had many Faults, yet he



he loved his Prince, and endeavoured to raise his Glory.

Ver. 29. *And David gathered all the People together,*] All that were fit for War.

*And went to Rabbah, and fought against it, and took it.*] The Army being reinforced with such great Recruits; they did not merely block up the City to starve it, and force it to surrender; but took it by Storm, and permitted the Soldiers to plunder and take the Spoil of it; as *Josephus* writes, διαρπάσαι τοῖς στρατιώταις ἀφῆκεν.

Ver. 30. *And he took the King's Crown from off his head,*] This was the King's part of the Spoil: And the *Talmudists* also say, that all the Household-stuff of the conquered King belonged to the King that was victorious. See *Grotius*, L. 3. *De Jure Belli & Pacis*, Cap. 23. Sect. 24.

*The Weight whereof was a Talent of Gold,*] Or rather, the Price, or Value of it: As the Hebrew Word frequently signifies, and not only Weight. See *Bochartus* in his *Hierozyicon*, P. 1. L. 2. Cap. 37. p. 380. And so it is to be taken here; for who was able to carry on his Head such a Weight as a Talent, which they say was an hundred twenty-five Pounds?

*With the precious Stones,*] Which made the Value of it so great. *Josephus* here saith, that there was one Stone of great Price, ἐν μέσῳ in the Middle of the Crown, which he calls a *Sardonyx*. The Original of which Fable *Bochartus* hath ingeniously conjectured in his *Hierozyicon*, P. 1. L. 5. Cap. 7. where he mentions other Conceits of the *Jews* about this Stone.

*And he brought forth the Spoil of the City in great abundance.*] This Passage is thus rendered by *Josephus*, πολλὰ δὲ καὶ ἄλλα σκύλα λαμπρὰ καὶ πολυτίμα εἶρεν ἐν τῇ πόλει. He found more and other Prey in the City very splendid, and of great Price.

Ver. 31. *And he brought forth the People that were therein, and put them under Saws, and under Harrows of Iron, and under Axes of Iron, and made them pass through the Brick-kilns:]* Some of the Inhabitants he caused to be sawn in funder; over others, Horses drew Harrows with great Iron Teeth; others, were drawn over sharp Sickles, or sharp Stones; which perhaps he means by *Brick-kilns*: For so some Interpreters understand it, that he dragged them through the Place where Bricks were made; and there grated their Flesh upon the ragged Pieces of broken Bricks. Tho' some will have this word *Malcken* to signify the Place where the *Ammonites* offered their Sacrifices to their God *Moloch* or *Malcom* (as he is often called) and made the People there to pass through the Fire. So the Vulgar translates it, *Fornacem Moloch*, the Furnace of *Moloch*. This dreadful Punishment was to terrify other Countries from violating the Right of Nations, by abusing publick Embassadors. Though many have thought it too severe, and looked upon it as an Argument, that *David* did this in the State of his Impenitence: When the mild and gentle Spirit of God was departed from him, and he was become cruel and furious, as well as lustful.

*And thus did he unto all the Cities of the Children of Ammon.*] This will not let us think that he punished so cruelly, only those who advised

the using of his Embassadors shamefully; or applauded it (as many it is likely did, that lived in *Rabbah*) for he treated all the Cities in the Country, in the same rigorous manner.

*So David and all the People returned to Jerusalem.*] After they had brought all the Country into subjection to him, and secured the Possession of it. For it is not likely all the Country People, Women and Children; were thus used: But only the military Men, who had levied War against *David*, and called the *Syrians* to their Assistance; and since put him to the trouble and charge of a long Siege of *Rabbah*.

### C H A P. XIII.

Ver. 1. *AND it came to pass after this, that Absalom the Son of David had a fair Sister, whose Name was Tamar, and Amnon the Son of David loved her.*] Now begun a sad Scene to be opened, of the Calamities which *Nathan* foretold *David* should befall his House, xii. 10. It is the common Opinion of the *Jews*, that in the War King *David* had with the King of *Geshur*, he took his Daughter captive; who being very beautiful, he lay with her once (as they fancy the Law, *Deut.* xxi. 11. allows) and begat of her this Daughter. And afterwards, she becoming a Profelyte, he married her; and begat *Absalom*. So this Daughter being begot while her Mother was a *Gentile*, they fancy she was not his legal Child; and consequently *Amnon* might have married her. See *Selden*, Lib. 5. *De Jure Nat. & Gent.* Cap. 23. and *Cocceius* upon the *Sanhedrin*, Cap. 2. N. 8. Annot. 7. of which more upon ver. 13. See there.

Ver. 2. *And Amnon was so vexed, that he fell sick for his Sister Tamar; for she was a Virgin; and Amnon thought it hard to do any thing to her.*] The Passion of his Mind disordered his Body, because he could not compass his Desire: For she being a Virgin, was under a strict Guard (as Virgins used to be) so that it was difficult for him to enjoy her Company. For to do any thing to her, signifies to do what he desired: As to do signifies not only in the Hebrew; but in other Languages.

Ver. 3. *And Amnon had a Friend, whose Name was Jonadab, the Son of Shimeah David's Brother:]* That is, his Cousin German, who are often called Brothers in Scripture.

*And Jonadab was a very subtil Man.*] To find Means to compass an End.

Ver. 4. *And he said unto him, Why art thou, being the King's Son,*] And the eldest Son who was next Heir to the Crown, iii. 2.

*Lean from day to day?*] In the Hebrew the Words are *Morning by Morning*. For whatsoever Diversions he might find in the Day, he had restless Nights, which made him look pale, and wan when he arose.

*Wilt thou not tell me?*] For Men are not wont to hide any thing from their Friends.

*And Amnon said unto him, I love Tamar my Brother Absalom's Sister.*] From these Words the *Jews* are wont to argue, that *Tamar* was nothing of kin to *Amnon*; for he calls her not his Sister, but his Brother *Absalom's* Sister. But this is a very frivolous Observation, for in the



two next Verses he calls her *my Sister*; and ver. 7. *David* calls him *her Brother*: and see ver. 11.

Ver. 5. *And Jonadab said unto him, Lay thee down on thy bed, and make thyself sick:*] He advises him to feign himself to be so ill, that it constrained him to keep his Bed. Instead of doing the true Office of a Friend, he flatters his Passion to his utter undoing.

*And when thy Father comes to see thee,*] As he knew he would when he heard of his Sickness: For, as I observed before, he was a great Lover of his Children.

*Say unto him, I pray thee, let my Sister Tamar come and give me Meat, and dress the Meat in my sight, that I may see it, and eat it at her hand.*] He would have him pretend, that his Stomach was so nice and squeamish, that he could like nothing that his Servants dressed; and therefore desired his Sister, who understood how to make delicate Dishes, might come and prepare something that he could relish.

Ver. 6. *And Amnon laid down, and made himself sick:*] He easily followed bad Counsel, to attain a bad End.

*And when the King was come to see him, Amnon said unto the King, I pray thee let Tamar my Sister come, and make me a Couple of Cakes in my sight, that I may eat at her hand.*] She was peculiarly noted, I suppose, to be very curious in making these *Lebiboth*, as the *Hebrew* calls them: Which the *Greeks* translate *κολυβιδας*, and are by Interpreters thought a delicious sort of Cakes: Tho' some take *κολύβεις* to have been an excellent Broth, or some other supping Meat, which cannot be meant here, because she is said, ver. 8. *to bake the Cakes*.

Ver. 7. *Then David sent home to Tamar, saying, Go now to thy Brother Amnon's House, and dress him Meat.*] He suspected no Fraud; and *Jonadab* was so wicked as not to discover it, and thereby prevent the Mischiefs.

Ver. 8. *So Tamar went to her Brother Amnon's House, (and he was laid down) and she took Flour, and kneaded it, and made Cakes in his sight, and did bake the Cakes.*] She shewed her self an obedient Daughter, and a kind Sister.

Ver. 9. *And she took a Pan,*] Wherein they had been baked.

*And poured them out before him,*] Into a Dish.

*But he refused to eat.*] Pretending he had no Appetite.

*And Amnon said, Have out all Men from me: and they went out every Man from him.*] He commanded all his Servants that attended, to leave him alone, that he might take some Rest.

Ver. 10. *And Amnon said unto Tamar, Bring the Meat into the Chamber, that I may eat of thy hand.*] He removed, I suppose, into an inner Room (where he thought he might more privately enjoy her) and pretended to be so refreshed by the Change, that his Stomach was come to him.

*And Tamar took the Cakes which she had made, and brought them into the Chamber to Amnon her Brother.*] Her Innocence made her think herself safe, especially with a Brother.

Ver. 11. *And when she had brought them unto him to eat, he took hold of her, and said unto her, come lie with me, my Sister.*] She sat down, it is likely, suspecting no Evil, upon his Bed-side to minister unto him: Which gave him

the Opportunity to lay violent hands upon her.

Ver. 12. *And she answered him, Nay, my Brother, do not force me;*] She having not Strength enough to get from him; resists him with strong Reasons; praying him to consider *first* that she was his Sister. Unto which relation she hoped he would have such a Reverence, as not to meddle with her, though she were willing; much less offer violence to her, which was abominable to do to a Stranger.

*For no such thing ought to be done in Israel;*] Whatsoever other Nations did (among whom Idols were worshipped with filthy Lusts) she prays him not to defile the Church of God, whose Glory was Holiness and Purity. The Jewish Doctors say, this gave such a Scandal, that the People began to speak thus one to another: If the King's Daughter be thus used, what will become of the Children of private Men? And if Men be so bold with chaste Women, what will they be with those that are wantonly inclined? And at this time, they say, a Decree was made, that two young People should not be alone together, *Gen. Sanhedrin*, Cap. 2. N. 8.

*Do not thou this folly.*] That is, this Wickedness. She prays him to consider the Foulness of the Sin; which would highly provoke the Divine Majesty.

Ver. 13. *And I, whither shall I cause my shame to go?*] She beseeches him, beside the Sin against God, to consider the Disgrace it would be to her; who should not be able to look any body in the face, nor would any body think of marrying her.

*And as for thee, thou shalt be as one of the Fools in Israel:*] Utterly lose his Reputation; and be look'd upon as a Man void of all Sense of Religion, Honour, or Humanity.

*Now therefore, I pray thee, speak unto the King; for he will not withhold me from thee.*] The Jews commonly fancying that she being begot, as I said before, of a Captive Woman before *David* married her, there was no such Kindred between her and *Amnon*, but that he might lawfully have her to Wife. But others think, that she being a young Woman, unacquainted with the Law, imagined, that they who had not the same Mother, might lawfully marry; or that the Power of the King was so great, that he might dispense with the Law, in this case: Or rather, she said any thing that came into her Mind, which she thought might deliver her from the present Danger. And this I take to be the truest Interpretation. For *Abarbinel* hath at large confuted the Opinion of her being begotten of *Maacab* before Marriage, when she was a *Gentile*. For as the Scripture saith no such thing, so he thinks it altogether improbable, that such a Man as *David* would have any thing to do with her, 'till she became a *Profelyte*. And therefore, he saith, she spake these Words, not as if she thought it lawful for the King to give her to *Amnon* for his Wife; but that she might get rid of his Sollicitations, by fair Speeches. For she having urged him with the foregoing Arguments, viz. the Heinousness of the Action itself; the Dishonour it would be to her, and no less Reproach to himself: And he persisting still blindly



blindly in his wicked Resolution; she adds these Words to give him hope; that he might have Satisfaction without acting so brutishly; if he did but ask his Father's Consent. As if she had said; If thou art so sick with Love, that thou art ready to die, speak to the King, unto whom thy Life is very dear; and he will preserve it; by granting thy Desire; for tho' by the Law thou canst not enjoy me, yet he will rather choose to let me have thee, than see thee die. This, saith *Abarbinel*, is the Sense of these Words, *he will not withhold me from thee*. Which she said to withhold and divert him from his purpose at that time; which *R. Samael Lania-do* (who endeavours to support the forenamed Opinion of their Doctors) doth but very weakly oppose. See *Buxtorf. de Sponsal. & Divortiis*, Sect. 20. See my Notes upon Chap. iii. 3.

Ver. 14. *Howbeit he would not hearken unto her Voice: but being stronger than she, he forced her, and lay with her.*] As the Nightingale in *Hesiod* sung in vain to the ravenous Hawk (as *Strigelius* glosses upon these Words) so *Tamar* said all this to a deaf Man; who was wholly under the power of his furious Lust, which would not suffer him to mind either God, or Men; or himself.

Ver. 15. *Then Amnon hated her exceedingly; so that the Hatred wherewith he hated her, was greater than the Love wherewith he had loved her.*] The Jews are much concerned to give a reason of this Hatred. And *Rasi*, and others say, that in her struggling with him to resist his Attempt upon her, she hurt those Parts wherewith he offended, which extreamly enraged him. This is not improbable: But others think it a better account to say, that she reproached him so bitterly with what he had done, that he could not endure to hear it; and perhaps his own Conscience began to fly in his face.

*And Amnon said unto her, Arise, be gone.*] He doth not so much as speak one kind Word to her, nor call her Sister (as *Pellicanus* observes) but in a rude manner bids her be gone, as if she had been a common Strumpet.

Ver. 16. *And she said unto him, There is no Cause;*] For this hard Usage.

*This Evil is greater than the other that thou didst unto me:*] It was not a greater Sin, but it did her the greater Mischiefe, because it publish'd her Shame, and made that known to all, which was done secretly.

*But he would not hearken to her.*] This was very barbarous, to thrust her out of doors immediately, and in the day-time, without consulting how to cover, if it were possible, so foul a Fact. So *Josephus*, he would not let her stay till Night, but commanded her to be put out while it was day-light, ἵνα καὶ μαρτυροῖ τῆς αἰσχυνῆς παρὰ πάντας, that she might meet with Witnesses of her Shame.

Ver. 17. *Then he called his Servants, that ministered unto him, and said unto them, Put now this Woman out from me, and bolt the Door after her.*] This was a new Violence to her, to be turned out of doors, with such contemptuous Language, as if she had been an impudent Intruder.

Ver. 18. *And she had a Garment of divers Colours upon her: For with such Robes were the*

*King's Daughters, that were Virgins, apparelled.*] This was such a Garment as *Joseph* the beloved Son of *Jacob* wore. See upon *Gen. xxxvii. 3*.

*And his Servants brought her out; and bolted the Door after her.*] An high Contempt of a King's Daughter; which they knew her to be by her Apparel; if by nothing else. But their Dependence on their Master over-ruled all the Respect due to her.

Ver. 19. *And Tamar put Ashes upon her Head; and rent her Garment of divers Colours that was upon her,*] But these were Expressions of the greatest Grief, which she was not able to suppress.

*And laid her Hands on her Head, and went on crying.*] Bewailing her Calamity. Laying her Hands on her Head was also a Token of great Trouble and Grief; she covering thereby her Face, as one ashamed. Thus *Jeremiah* saith, the Children of *Israel* should go forth from *Assyria*, with their Hands upon their Head, xi. 37. that is, saith *Abarbinel*, like a Woman who bewails her Misfortune, and there is none to deliver her. *St. Hierom* and *Theodoret* more plainly; they shall go forth with their Hands on their Heads, in signum pudoris & doloris, in token of their Shame and of their Grief. Spreading forth their Hands is the same. *Lam. i. 17*

Ver. 20. *And Absalom her Brother,*] Unto whose House she went.

*Said unto her, Hath Aminon thy Brother been with thee?*] A modest Expression for the foul Rape he had committed: At which he conceived great Indignation, and therefore in scorn doth not call him her Brother *Amnon*, but *Aminon*. So the Words are in the *Hebrew*, *Hath Aminon thy Brother been with thee?*

*But hold thy peace, my Sister: He is thy Brother, regard not this thing.*] He seems to desire her to put up the Injury in silence; that it might not bring too much Disgrace on their Family: But indeed, that he might dissemble the Revenge he intended, upon occasion; to take of him.

*So Tamar remained desolate in her Brother Absalom's House.*] She would see no body, I suppose, but only those that waited on her in her Brother's Family.

Ver. 21. *And when King David heard of all these things, he was very wroth.*] But out of his great Indulgence, inflicted no sort of Punishment upon him, that we read of: *μεγίστην γὰρ τὴν ὀργὴν αὐτῷ* (as *Josephus* observes) for he was his eldest Son, which made him spare him.

Ver. 22. *And Absalom spake unto his Brother Amnon neither good nor bad:*] Never said a Word to him about this matter, when they met together.

*For Absalom hated Amnon, because he had forced his Sister Tamar.*] Tho' he hated him in his heart, yet he never expressed the least Resentment. So the Particle *ki* should be translated, not *for*, but *tho'*. By this means *Amnon* was lull'd asleep into a Belief, that *Absalom* would not trouble him for what he had done, because he did not threaten, nor so much as expostulate with him, nor take any notice of what had passed; tho', in reason, he ought to have been the more afraid, that he was meditating a terrible Revenge: According to the Fable of the little Mouse, who when the Dunghill-Cock came into the Parlour, clapping his Wings,



and making a great noise, was very much affrighted at it, but minded not the Cat which came gently creeping towards her; whom her Mother chid for her Folly, telling her there was no Danger from the fluttering, clamorous Cock; but from the silent Cat, she was to expect present Death. So *Victorinus Strigelius* glosses upon this Place.

Ver. 23. *And it came to pass after two Years,*] In all which time *Absalom* had said nothing to *Amnon* about his abused Sister; that he might think he was ignorant of it, or did not regard it, or had forgot it.

*That Absalom had Sheep-shearers in Baal-hazor, which is beside Ephraim: And Absalom invited all the King's Sons.*] For the time of Sheep-shearing was a kind of Harvest in those Countries; and therefore full of Joy: which they expressed by making a Feast upon those Days. We read of it early in the Book of *Genesis*, viz. of *Laban's* going to shear his Sheep, xxxi. 19. and *Judah*, after his mourning for his Wife's Death, went to refresh himself at a Sheep-shearing with his Friends, xxxviii. 12, 13. And it was at a time of such Joy, that *David* sent to *Nabal* for some Relief, 1 *Sam.* xxv. 8.

Ver. 24. *And Absalom came to the King, and said, Behold now, thy Servant hath Sheep-shearers, let the King, I beseech thee, and his Servants, go with thy Servant.*] He had no mind the King should go; but invited him, to avoid all Suspicion.

Ver. 25. *And the King said to Absalom, Nay, my Son, let us not all go,*] For he seems to have invited all his Family: When he beseeched him, and his Servants to go with him.

*Lest we be chargeable unto thee; and he pressed him: howbeit he would not go, but blessed him.*] Gave him thanks for his Invitation, and prayed God to bless him.

Ver. 26. *Then said Absalom, If not, I pray thee, let my Brother Amnon go with me.*] To cover his Design, he pretended, I suppose, a special Kindness for him: Or at least desired the King to do him the Honour, to let him have the Company of his eldest Brother.

*And the King said unto him, Why should he go with thee?*] Being the next Person in the Kingdom to the King, it is likely *David* thought it would make the Entertainment too chargeable.

Ver. 27. *But Absalom pressed him, that he let Amnon and all the King's Sons go with him.*] Who might have taken exceptions, if *Amnon* alone had been entertained by him; therefore his Importunity prevailed to have the company of them all.

Ver. 28. *And Absalom had commanded his Servants, saying, Mark ye now when Amnon is merry with Wine,*] And had no Thoughts of any Danger.

*And when I say unto you, Smite Amnon, then kill him, fear not: Have not I commanded you? Be courageous, and be valiant.*] He encourages them to hope, that he being the King's Son, and next Heir to the Crown, when *Amnon* was gone (for *Chileab* seems now to be dead) would stand between them and Danger of being called to an account for what they did.

Ver. 29. *And the Servants of Absalom did as Absalom had commanded: then all the King's Sons arose, and gat every one upon his Mule and fled.*]

Fearing he might destroy all the Royal Family: For Ambition was as strong in him as Revenge; which appeared afterward in his Endeavours to dethrone his Father. *Mules* began to be much in use in *David's* days (as *Bochart* observes) who appointed *Solomon* to be carried on his own Mule, and declared King, 1 *Kings* i. 33. And *Solomon* had a Present of them made to him, 1 *Kings* x. 23. And they were not used only to ride on, but for Carriage of Burdens, 1 *Chron.* xii. 40. and to draw Chariots, as the LXX understand *Isaiah* lxvi. 20. See *Hierozoicon*, P. 1. Lib. 2. Cap. 19.

Ver. 30. *And it came to pass while they were in the way, that Tidings came to David, saying, Absalom hath slain all the King's Sons, and there is not one of them left.*] He that saw *Amnon* killed, presently ran away in a great Fright, imagining all the King's Sons were so served.

Ver. 31. *Then the King arose, and tare his Garments, and lay on the Earth; and all his Servants stood by with their Clothes rent.*] This was a natural Expression of great Grief, to throw themselves not upon their Beds (as *Maimonides* observes) but upon the Ground. Otherwise, they turned their Beds upside down, and so lay as hard as if they lay upon the Ground. See *Gierus de Luctu Hebr.* Cap. 18. Sect. 8.

Ver. 32. *And Jonadab the Son of Shimeab, David's Brother, answered and said,*] Who was noted before to be a very subtle Man (ver. 3.) and understood all the Intrigues (as we now speak) about the Court.

*Let not my Lord suppose they have slain all the young Men the King's Sons; for Amnon only is dead:*] This he spake not from any certain Intelligence he had received from *Absalom's* House; but from rational Conjecture, out of what he had learnt concerning *Absalom's* Resentment.

*For by the Appointment of Absalom this hath been determined, from the day that he forced his Sister Tamar.*] He had talked, I suppose, among his Familiars, that he would take a time to revenge the Injury done his Sister, though for the present he took no notice of it: which *Jonadab*, (being a prying Man, had some way or other discovered.

Ver. 33. *Now therefore let not my Lord the King take the thing to his heart, to think that all the King's Sons are dead: for Amnon only is dead.*] He affirms this with the greater Confidence, because he never heard (tho' he was of a very inquisitive Temper) of any Quarrel *Absalom* had with the rest of the King's Sons, but only *Amnon*.

Ver. 34. *But Absalom fled.*] With all his Servants who committed the Murder. For he soon found it was not in his, nor any body's power to protect them.

*And the young Man that kept the Watch, lift up his Eyes, and looked,*] Round about him.

*And behold, there came much People by the way of the Hill-side behind him.*] They did not think fit to keep the direct Road from *Baal-Hazor* to *Jerusalem* (for what reason, we cannot now know) but went about: So that they came not before the Watchman, but behind him.

Ver. 35. *And Jonadab said unto the King, Behold, the King's Sons come: As thy Servant said, so it is.*] Hearing a Company was coming, he went



went out, it is likely, to descry who they were : And, seeing the King's Sons, made haste and carried *David* the good News.

Ver. 36. *And it came to pass, as soon as he had made an end of speaking, that behold the King's Sons came,]* They trod upon *Jonadab's* heels, as we now speak.

*And lift up their Voice and wept : And the King also, and all his Servants wept very sore.]* See iii. 32. But we read of no publick Funeral and Lamentations which he made for him, as he did for *Abner*.

Ver. 37. *But Absalom fled, and went to Talmai the Son of Ammihud King of Geshur :]* For no City of Refuge in his own Country could give him Protection, having committed a designed Murder ; therefore he fled out of the Kingdom to his Mother's Father. See iii. 3.

*And David mourned for his Son every day.]* Either for the loss of *Amnon*, or for *Absalom* ; who was lost, as to any Comfort he could have from his Company. It seems to be meant of the latter ; for it is said he was comforted for *Amnon* : and therefore his continued Affliction for three Years together, was upon the account of *Absalom*.

Ver. 38. *And Absalom fled, and went to Geshur, and was there three Years.]* This is repeated to shew, that he found such Favour with his Grandfather, that he went no further, but continued with him three Years in safety. *Geshur*, it appears from xv. 8. was a part of Syria.

Ver. 39. *And the Soul of David longed to go forth unto Absalom :]* He had a vehement Desire to see him. Though some, even of the Ancients, translate the Words, *he ceased to pursue after Absalom* : As if he had at first endeavoured to seize him, either in his Flight to *Geshur*, or afterwards, when at any time he went abroad. But ours appears to be a true Translation, from the beginning of the next Chapter ; where *David's* Heart is said to be towards *Absalom*.

*For he was comforted concerning Amnon, because he was dead.]* He was unwilling to want the Comfort of both his Sons ; and since it was impossible to bring *Amnon* back again, he long'd to bring back *Absalom* : But he had committed so horrid a Crime, that he durst not venture to restore him in his Favour.

#### C H A P. XIV.

Verse 1. **N**OW *Joab* the Son of *Zeruiah* perceived the King's Heart was towards *Absalom*.] That he longed to see him, and have him restored to his own Country, if it could be contrived by some handsome Pretence for it. Which *Joab* therefore endeavoured to bring about ; knowing he was dear to the People, as well as to *David* : And he might by his Reduction ingratiate himself with *Absalom*, whom he looked upon as next Heir to the Crown.

Ver. 2. *And Joab sent to Tekoah,]* A City in the Tribe of *Judah* (2 Chron. xi. 5, 6.) but at a distance from *Jerusalem* : And the further off, the better for his purpose ; because the Case which the Woman was to represent to the King, could not easily be enquired into, if he desired to know the Truth. The *Jews* say, it was in

the Tribe of *Asher*, the Place where the Prophet *Amos* was born.

*And fetcht thence a wise Woman,]* A Woman was the fittest for this purpose ; especially a Widow, who was proper to move Compassion. And a grave Woman, as *Josephus* calls her (*σοφιστήρις*) was still more proper.

*And said unto her, I pray thee, feign thyself now to be a Mourner, and put on now mourning Apparel, and anoint not thyself with Oil, but be as a Woman that had a long time mourned for the dead :]* Who put on no Ornaments, nor used any Ointment, but appeared in a sordid neglected Condition.

Ver. 3. *And come to the King, and speak on this manner unto him : So Joab put the Words into her mouth.]* And, in all probability, introduc'd her into the King's presence ; and then left her to manage the matter with him, according to her Prudence. Or, as seems to be suggested, ver. 21. he stood by at some distance, whilst she addressed herself to the King.

Ver. 4. *And when the Woman of Tekoah spake to the King, she fell on her face to the ground, and did obeysance,]* This was the humblest Posture of Reverence.

*And said, Help, O King.]* Relieve a poor distressed Widow.

Ver. 5. *And the King said unto her, What ail-eth thee ? and she answered, I am indeed a Widow Woman, and my Husband is dead.]* Which made her the greater Object of Pity.

Ver. 6. *And thy Handmaid had two Sons, and they two strove together in the Field, and there was none to part them, but the one smote the other, and slew him.]* This, and the foregoing, and the next Verse, represent her Condition as very lamentable : That she had lost her Husband, and one of her Sons, and was in danger to be deprived of the other ; which was all she had.

Ver. 7. *And behold the whole Family is risen against thine Handmaid, and they say deliver him that smote his Brother, that we may kill him,]* Put him to death, as the Law required, Numb. xxxv. 18, 19.

*For the Life of his Brother which he slew, and we will destroy the Heir also :]* These Words, if spoken by the Kindred, shew it was not Love to Justice, but a Desire to have the Inheritance, which moved them to prosecute the Murderer.

*And so they shall quench my Coal which is left,]* Deprive me of the little Comfort of my Life, which remains (and is in a manner buried as a Coal in the Ashes) and ruin my Family.

*And shall not leave to my Husband neither Name, nor Remainder upon earth.]* Utterly extinguish her Husband's Memory. In all this she intended to frame a Case as like to *David's* as she could devise : By determining which in her favour, he might judge how much more reasonable it was to preserve *Absalom*. But there was a wide Difference between her Case and his, how plausible soever their Likeness might appear. For her Son she pretended was slain in a Scuffle with his Brother, and was no premeditated Murder, as *Absalom's* was. It was also in the Field, where there were no Witnesses, whether it was wilful or no : Whereas all the King's Sons saw *Amnon* barbarously murdered by his Brother. And in this last passage the Difference is as great as



in any; for *David's* Family was not in danger to be extinguished, if *Absalom* were lost also: he having many Children, and also many Wives, whereby he might have more. And therefore in that likewise this Case differed from hers who was a Widow.

Ver. 8. *And the King said, Go to thine House, and I will give charge concerning thee.*] He promises he would take care the matter should be thoroughly examined, and justice done her.

Ver. 9. *And the Woman of Tekoah said unto the King, My Lord, O King, the Iniquity be on me, and on my Father's House: and the King and his Throne be guiltless.*] She desires a speedy Sentence might be given in her favour; which if it prov'd wrong by her misinforming the King, she prays the Guilt might light on her and her Family, and the King and his be innocent.

Ver. 10. *And the King said, Whosoever saith aught unto thee, bring him unto me, and he shall not touch thee anymore.*] If any one endeavoured to lay hold on her Son, he bids her bring that Person before him (for which end he commanded his Officers to be assistant to her) and he would punish him, so that none should dare to meddle with him any more.

Ver. 11. *Then she said, I pray thee, let the King remember the LORD thy God,*] She seems to desire him to confirm what he had said by an Oath. For Men swore by *remembering* (or *making mention of*) the Name of the LORD. Others think she only prays him to remember how merciful and gracious God is, and had been to himself, even in pardoning the Murder of *Uriah*.

*That thou wouldst not suffer the Avenger of Blood to destroy any more,*] In the Hebrew, *to multiply to destroy*: That is, after she had lost one Son, to take away the Life of the other, as the next Words explain it.

*Lest they destroy my Son.*] Or, let them not destroy my Son, which remains.

*And he said, As the LORD liveth,*] Tho' it was a bold Request in the Woman to desire him to confirm what he had said by an Oath; yet such was his pity to her, that to send her away entirely satisfied, he solemnly swears he would preserve her Son.

*There shall not one Hair of thy Son fall to the earth.*] He should not suffer the least harm upon this account.

Ver. 12. *Then the Woman said, Let thy Handmaid, I pray thee, speak one word unto my Lord the King: And he said, Say on.*] Now she designed to open her Meaning in this Parable, and plainly desires the King to make her Case his own: but it would take up some time, and therefore she bespeaks his Favour to hear her patiently.

Ver. 13. *And the Woman said, Wherefore hast thou thought such a thing*] As that which she had hitherto been speaking of.

*Against the People of Israel?*] Who were in danger to lose *Absalom*, the Heir of the Crown; which was far worse than the private Loss of her Son.

*For the King doth speak this thing, as one that is faulty, in that the King doth not fetch home his banished.*] In the Sentence he had pronounced for her, he had condemned himself, because he had not called *Absalom* from his Exile. This

looks like too bold a Speech: But the Sense is no more than this; Do not judge otherwise in thy own case, than thou hast done in mine. For all the World allows (as *Strigelius* here observes) the Reasonableness of that Saying, *Odi sapientem qui sibi non sapit*. Her Reasoning indeed was infirm, his Case and hers being very unlike upon several accounts, which I before observed. But tho' he supposed killing of her Son was casual, but *Amnon's* Murder designed; and she had no more Sons, and *David* had many, &c. yet *David* perceiving how the People stood affected towards *Absalom* (otherwise he knew this Woman durst not have spoken after this manner) and it being his own Desire, as much as theirs, to have him re-called, he overlooked all the Differences there were in his case, and did not go about to shew her the Weakness of her Discourse.

Ver. 14. *For we must needs die, and are as Water spilt upon the ground, which cannot be gathered up again:*] She pleads for further Pity towards him, from the Consideration of our common Mortality, and represents that Death comes on apace, and we need not hasten it: And when we are dead, we can no more be recovered, than Water when it is spilt on the ground, which is presently sucked up and seen no more. This is also a weak, though plausible Argument; for by this reasoning all Malefactors should be spared, because it will not be long before Death cuts them off: But when we have a mind to a thing, all Reasons seem strong to persuade us to it. Some apply this to his mourning for *Amnon*; as if she had said, dost thou still weep for thy other Son? He must have died; and now he is gone, thy Tears cannot call him to Life again. But this is not probable, because it is said in the conclusion of the foregoing Chapter, *He was comforted concerning Amnon, seeing he was dead*.

*Neither doth God respect any Person,*] If this be a right Translation, the Meaning is, that *David* himself was mortal, though a great King. But I think the Hebrew Words, *Issa Nephesk*, never signify Respect to Persons; but the Word *Panim* is used in that sense, not *Nephesk*, which signifies the Soul, as the other doth the Face or Countenance. Therefore these Words should be translated, *God doth not take away the Soul, or Life*. She argues from the sparing Mercy of God, who doth not presently inflict the Punishment of Death, when Men have deserved it. And perhaps she had in this a particular Respect to *Absalom*, whom God had not cut off, but let him live; and therefore she desires *David* to imitate God.

*Yet doth he devise means, that his banished be not expelled from him.*] Or, according to the foregoing Words, *but he doth devise means*, &c. God provided many Cities of Refuge, she means, to which he that slew another unawares might flee; where though he was banished from his Habitation for a time, he was not quite expelled, but might return again, after the Death of the High-Priest. From whence she argues, that Kings being the Images of God, nothing could more become them than Clemency and Mercy; in mitigating the Punishment of Offenders, tho' there were just Cause of Anger against them. Which still was short of the present Case; for

God.



God was not so merciful as to provide for the safety of a wilful Murderer. But such specious Arguments are good enough, when Men are willing to be perswaded: And nothing more moving than the Example of God, who doth not delight in the Death of a Sinner.

Ver. 15. *Now therefore that I am come to speak of this thing unto my Lord the King, it is because the People have made me afraid:]* This sounds as if the People talked so discontentedly about Absalom's Banishment, that it was another Motive to her to make this Address to the King. But it doth not seem to me to be likely, that the People were dissatisfied, because he was not recalled; but rather David was afraid the People would be dissatisfied, if he did recall him. I said indeed before (ver. 13.) that David imagined by her Speech, that they were desirous of his Return from Banishment; but he did not think so before: And whatsoever their Desires might be, they did not express any Discontent, because he was not; for then there would not have been any need of this Woman to bring that about, which he desired more than they. Therefore I think the last Words should be translated, not *because*, but *tho' the People made me afraid*; that is, those she advised withal, told her it was too bold an Attempt: But this did not discourage her, because she presumed the King would be so good, as to give her a favourable Audience, and not be angry with her, since what she said was well intended. So the next Word is to be translated, *but*, not *and*.

*But thy Handmaid said, I will now speak unto the King; it may be that the King will perform the Request of his Handmaid.]* That is, notwithstanding the Fears which some put into her, she resolved to make this Petition. And she gives her Reason for it, in the next Verse.

Ver. 16. *For the King will hear, to deliver his Handmaid out of the hand of the Men that would destroy me and my Son together out of the Inheritance of God:]* Clemency and Kindness are the Properties of good Kings; and such she saith she knew the King to be, who would take pity upon her and her Son, in whose Preservation her Life was bound up. And when she calls the Land of Israel, the Inheritance of God, who dwelt among them there, she secretly puts the King in mind how dangerous it was to let Absalom (unto whom she had adventured to apply her Case) to continue in an idolatrous Country; where God was not worshipped, as he was in the Land of Israel.

Ver. 17. *Then thine Handmaid said, the Word of my Lord the King shall now be comfortable:]* Thereupon she grew confident that the King's Answer would be according to her Heart's desire; it being the highest Glory of a Prince (as the Emperor Titus was wont to say) not to send any Petitioner away sad and sorrowful. And indeed the King's great Patience, in attending to so long an Address, might make her presume to receive a gracious Answer.

*For as an Angel of God, so is my Lord the King, to discern both good and bad:]* To discern between just and unreasonable Petitions; as well as patiently to hear both those things which are grateful, and those which are less acceptable. And therefore she doubted not of such a kind

Answer as the Angels bring, who are Messengers of divine Mercy.

*Therefore the LORD thy God will be with thee.]* To direct him to judge aright, and to shew Mercy. There is a great deal of Artifice in all this. For to presume upon the Kindness of another, and to expect gracious Answers from their noble Qualities, is very moving; Men being very loth to defeat those who think so highly of them; according to that of Aristotle, in the second Book of his Rhetorick, *We love those that admire us*.

Ver. 18. *Then the King answered and said unto the Woman, Hide not from me, I pray thee, one thing that I shall ask thee. And the Woman said, Let my Lord the King now speak.]* As much as to say, and I will answer truly.

Ver. 19. *And the King said, Is not the hand of Joab with thee in all this?] His Prudence made him suspect that a Woman durst not have adventured upon this Speech, but by the Counsel and Contrivance of some greater Person. And none more likely than Joab, whom he knew to be a cunning Man, and a Friend to Absalom.*

*And the Woman answered and said, As thy Soul liveth, my Lord the King, none can turn to the right hand or to the left, from ought that my Lord the King hath spoken:]* As much as to say in our Language, *it is even so*. And therefore she did not seek by any Windings, or Turnings this way or the other, to dissemble the matter, but plainly confessed it, as it follows. Concerning the Phrase, *Turn to the right hand or left*, see upon Gen. xxiv. 49.

*For thy Servant Joab he bad me, and he put all these Words in the mouth of thy Handmaid.]* The Sense of them, which he left her to manage to the best advantage.

Ver. 20. *To fetch about this Form of Speech hath thy Servant Joab done this thing:]* The Meaning is, Joab instructed her, that having obtained pardon for her Son, she should turn about the face of her Speech (as the Words are in the Hebrew) another way; and transfer it to Absalom, as a parallel Case with her own. And so Josephus expresses her Sense, Lib. 7. Antiq. Cap. 8. *When she had thanked the King for his Pity towards her, she said, But that I may be more certain of thy Clemency, receive thy own Son into thy favour; for how is it possible for me not to doubt of the favour thou promisest me, when thou still sufferest thy own Son to lie under thy Indignation for the like Fault?*

*And my Lord the King is wise, according to the Wisdom of an Angel of God, to know all things that are done in the earth.]* That is, in the whole Kingdom, where nothing could be hid from him, but he knew all Men, and their Counsels; and likewise knew what was fit to be done, in answer to their Desires. She still persists in her Admiration of the King, that she might the more incline him to grant her Request.

Ver. 21. *And the King said unto Joab, Behold now, I have done this thing: Go therefore, and bring the young Man Absalom again.]* The King turned from her to him (who seems to have stood in some part of the Room, while she delivered her Petition) as the principal Agent in this Business; whom he was pleased to gratify in his Request.



Ver. 22. *And Joab fell to the ground on his face, and bowed himself,]* As the Woman did, when she entered into his presence, to present her Petition, ver. 4.

*And thanked the King :]* For Favours are to be no less humbly acknowledged, than humbly begged.

*And Joab said, To-day thy Servant knoweth that I have found Grace in thy sight, my Lord, O King, in that the King hath fulfilled the Request of his Servant.]* He looked upon it as a Mark of the King's great Kindness, who was not angry, but granted so bold a Request; in which he was mistaken: for tho' he passed by the Murder of Amnon, yet he remember'd Joab's Murder of Abner to his dying day.

Ver. 23. *So Joab arose and went to Gesbur, and brought Absalom to Jerusalem.]* St. Ambrose mentions this as an Instance of the wonderful Affection which Parents have to their Children, tho' degenerate and wicked; by which we may raise our Thoughts to comprehend a little of the inconceivable Love of our heavenly Father (as Strigelius here meditates) towards his own eternal Son; and towards Mankind for his sake.

Ver. 24. *And the King said,]* When he heard he was come to Jerusalem.

*Let him turn to his own House, and let him not see my face.]* His Affection to him did not so blind his Eyes, but he still saw, it would not be for his Honour, to let him come into his presence.

*So Absalom returned to his own House,]* This intimates, as if he came not only to Jerusalem, but to the King's Court.

*And saw not the King's Face.]* Which was some Humiliation to him, and put him upon Repentance; for he saw he had not a full Pardon, being not utterly restored to the King's Favour. The People also were convinced by this how detestable his Crime was, in the King's account; and that he would not easily pass by the like in any other Person, since he could not endure the sight of a Son, whose Hand was defiled with the Blood of his Brother.

Ver. 25. *But in all Israel there was none to be so much praised as Absalom, for Beauty, from the Sole of the Foot, even to the Crown of the Head there was no Blemish in him.]* For his Father and Mother were both very lovely Persons: But this proved the Occasion of his Ruin; for he grew proud, because he was so much admired; and forgetting his cruel Murther of his Brother, it tempted him to rely on the Favour of the People, in committing of a greater Crime, which was seeking the Life of his Father.

Ver. 26. *And when he polled his Head (for it was at every Year's end that he polled it; because the Hair was heavy to him, therefore he polled it.)* It is not certain, that he cut his Hair once a Year: For the Words in the Hebrew are, *from the end of Days to Days*, without any particular Designation of the Time. And therefore the Targum translates it, *at stated Times*; that is, when it grew too heavy, which might be once in two Years, more or less, as Bochartus observes.

*He weighed the Hair of his Head at two hundred Shekels, after the King's weight.]* In those days Hair was accounted a great Ornament,

and the longer it was, the more it was esteemed. And therefore no wonder Absalom nourished his with much Care, and let it grow to great length: which made him look more like a goodly Person. Infomuch, that in After-ages, they were wont to use Art (as perhaps they did now) to make the Hair grow, and grow thick, and strong (as the same Bochartus hath shewn) and they anointed their Hair also with fragrant Oils of Myrrh, Cinnamon, and such like; and after that, powder'd it with Dust of Gold: All which made it very ponderous. So that Absalom's Hair weighed, when it was cut off, two hundred Shekels; which he demonstrates was no more than three Pound and two Ounces of our Weight. This is not at all incredible, considering that he let it grow so long as he was able to bear the Weight of it; which was increased, it is likely, by such Additions as I have mentioned; for a King's Son would not want any thing that might add to his Splendor. Josephus also informs us, that such Ostentation was in use among the Jews in those days; for speaking of the noble Guard which attended King Solomon, with long Hair flowing about their Shoulders, he saith, that they scattered in their Hair every day, ψήγματα τῆ χρυσίδος, little Particles of Gold, which (made their Hair shine and sparkle by the Reflection of the Sun's Rays upon the Gold. As for their Interpretation, who think that Absalom's Hair did not weigh thus much, but was sold for two hundred Shekels, Bochartus shews how absurd it is to imagine a King's Son would sell his Hair, or that any one would buy it, especially at that rate; there being no Perukes worn in those days. And besides, the Text confutes it, *he weighed the Hair of his Head, &c.* whereas, if it had been sold, the Buyer would have weighed the Money, not Absalom; as Abraham did, when he bought the Field of Ephron, Gen. xxiii. 16. and Jeremiab when he bought the Field in Anathoth, xxxii. 9. See his Epistle to Michael Faulkellius, at the end of the third Edition of his *Geographia Sacra*.

Ver. 27. *And unto Absalom were born three Sons and one Daughter, whose Name was Tamar; she was a Woman of a fair Countenance.]* How the LXX in the Vatican Edition, came to add here, that Tamar was afterward the Wife of Rehoboam, and bare him Abijah, I cannot tell; but I suppose it was from some Jewish Tradition.

Ver. 28. *So Absalom dwelt two full Years in Jerusalem, and saw not the King's Face.]* He lived privately, having the Company only of his own Family. For it is likely, he was by the King's Command confined to his House, where he had few Visitants, being under the King's Displeasure.

Ver. 29. *Therefore Absalom sent for Joab, to have sent him to the King,]* He did not employ his Privacy so well as he should have done; but had ambitious Designs in his head, if he could be restored to the King's Favour, and enjoy greater Liberty; for which he intended to make Joab his Intercessor.

*But he would not come to him: And when he sent again the second time, he would not come.]* Josephus thinks that Joab only took time to consider, whether he should do what was desired: But Absalom was in haste, and could



not endure any De'ay, and therefore did as follows. Or perhaps *Joab* thought he had done enough, and was afraid the King might be angry, if he pressed him further.

Ver. 30. *Therefore he said unto his Servants, See, Joab's Field is near unto mine, and he bath Barley there; go and set it on fire: And Absalom's Servants set the Field on fire.*] He had those still about him, who were ready to execute any Command, tho' never so unjust; as they did when he bad them kill *Amnon*. And it appears by this, what a daring Person *Absalom* was, who durst affront such a Man as *Joab* after this manner.

Ver. 31. *Then Joab arose and went to Absalom unto his House, and said unto him, Wherefore have thy Servants set my Field on fire?*] This carried *Joab* presently to his House, to expostulate with him about the Damage he had done him; for which we do not find he offers any Satisfaction; which may make it seem strange, that so furious a Man as *Joab* should not immediately revenge himself, by ordering his Field to be burnt, or some such way: But he was so wise as to consider, that being the King's Son he might some time or other be reconciled to his Father, and do him a prejudice.

Ver. 32. *And Absalom answered Joab, Behold I sent unto thee, saying, Come hither, that I may send thee to the King,*] He seems to have no Sense of any Injury he had done *Joab*, but he had just cause to complain that he would not come to him.

*To say, Wherefore am I come from Geshur?*] These were Words too insolent to be sent to the King; therefore one would think he only expressed himself thus to *Joab*.

*It had been better for me to have been there still:*] He might have found means to return thither, if he had not had other Designs in his head; which made him desire to have his full Liberty.

*Now therefore let me see the King's Face; and if there be any Iniquity in me, let him kill me.*] He could not but know there was Iniquity in him: but he pretends, if the King would not pardon it, he had rather die than not see his Father's Face.

Ver. 33. *So Joab came to the King, and told him: and when he had called for Absalom,*] These passionate Expressions, that he was weary of Life, while he continued banished from the King's Presence; nay, that he desired to die, so he might but see him, moved *Joab* to intercede for him, and *David* to receive him into his favour.

*He came to the King, and bowed himself on his Face to the ground before the King:*] Begging pardon, as *Josephus* explains it, for the Sin he had committed.

*And the King kissed Absalom.*] In token of Reconciliation. *Josephus* saith the King raised him up from the ground, καὶ τῶν γεγονότων ἀμνησίαν ἐπαγγέλλεται, and promised him an Oblivion of what was past. Which was a great Weakness in *David*; for impenitent Persons become more wicked by a full Pardon of their Offences, as *Absalom* did. Who being thus received into the King's Favour, became more gracious with the People; who before looked upon him as an excommunicated Person, and would have nothing to do with him.

## CHAP. XV.

Verse 1. *AND it came to pass after this,*] When he thought he had established himself in his Father's good Affection.

*That Absalom prepared himself Chariots, and Horses, and fifty Men to run before him.*] He took great State upon him, and made him, as we now speak, a splendid Equipage: Being royally attended, as the next Heir to the Crown (for we hear nothing of *Chileab*, who it is likely was dead) designing to draw the eyes of the People to him. Who, as they were much in love with his Beauty, so were mightily taken with this unusual fine Sight of Chariots and Horses; which the Law did not allow: But *David* was so indulgent, that he took no notice of it.

Ver. 2. *And Absalom rose up early in the Morning,*] He accustomed himself to rise betimes in the Morning, to make a show of his great Care for the publick Good.

*And stood beside the way of the Gate:*] Not of the King's Palace, some think, but of the City, where was the Seat of Judgment. But since he speaks of coming to the King for Judgment, it is likely he sat in his own Palace, at the Gate of which *Absalom* was wont to stand.

*And it was so, that when any Man that had a Controversy came to the King for Judgment,*] Who reserved all weighty Causes for his own Hearing: And Appeals were made to him from the other Courts, as *Corn. Bertram* observes, Cap. 10. de Republ. Judaica.

*Then Absalom called unto him, and said, Of what City art thou?*] He kindly enquired where he dwelt; and, it is likely, what he was, and of what Family, &c. as if he intended to take a particular Care of him.

*And he said, Thy Servant is of one of the Tribes of Israel.*] That is, of such or such a Tribe, and of such a City in that Tribe as he named to him.

Ver. 3. *And Absalom said unto him, See, thy matters are good and right,*] He was so officious as to look into their Cause a while, and examine it; flattering every one into an Opinion, that in his Judgment, he had Right on his side. So that if their Cause went against them, they might conclude, that if *Absalom* had been Judge, it would have gone otherways.

*But there is no Man deputed of the King to hear thee.*] The King he pretended was old, and unfit to judge Causes, till some others had first heard them, and opened the Matter to him. And his Sons [who being principal Officers in his Family (see chap. viii. ult.) were the fittest to bring Business to him] were Men of Pleasure, and did not mind publick Affairs. Thus he struck not only at his Father, but at all his Brethren; and principally, it is likely, at *Solomon*: who he was afraid would be preferred before him by his Father, being a beloved Son, and born of an *Israelite*, whereas he was begot of a Stranger, the Daughter of the King of *Geshur*. Who, it is probable, might put him upon this Course; and his Banishment for three Years had also exasperated him: And his being secluded for two Years more from seeing his Father, was so far from bringing him to any Sense of his Guilt;



Guilt, that it more enraged him against his Father, and all his Family.

Ver. 4. *And Absalom said moreover, O that I were made Judge in the Land, that every Man that hath any Suit or Cause, might come unto me, and I would do him justice.*] Tho' he was admitted to come to Court, and see the King, yet he had no Office there, as the rest of the King's Sons had; which he took ill, and endeavour'd the People should do so too; by magnifying his Care, if he were in Authority, to do them speedy Justice.

Ver. 5. *And it was so, that when any Man came nigh him to do him obeysance,*] To honour him as the King's Son.

*That he put forth his Hand, and took him,*] About the Neck, I suppose, in token of great Familiarity and Kindness.

*And kissed him,*] A most vile Piece of Flattery: But People are pleased with such unwonted Compliments. For so *Plato* observes, that when any Person intended to make himself a Tyrant in a Popular State, he no sooner entred upon the Government, but *προσγελάτε καὶ ἀσπά- ζεται πάντας ὃν αὐν περιτυγχάνει*, he smiled upon all, and kindly saluted them, wheresoever he met them; avowing that he hated Tyranny, and promising great things, both privately and publickly, καὶ πᾶσιν ἰλεως τὲ καὶ πατρῷς εἶναι προσποιεῖται, seeming to be mild, gentle, and fatherly unto all, *Lib. 8. de Republ. p. 566. Edit. Serrani.*

Ver. 6. *And after this manner did Absalom to all Israel that came to the King for Judgment:*] He continued this Course a long time, till he had inveigled the People, and gained their Hearts to him. For as *Aristotle* observes in his *Politicks, Lib. 5. Cap. 4.* all Changes in Commonwealths are made by one of these two ways, ὅτε μὲν διὰ βίας, ὅτε δὲ δι' ἀπάτης, either by Force and Violence, or else by Deceit and Craft. Now there is not a more famous Instance in History of the latter, than this of *Absalom*, who, by flattering Speeches, and large Promises, cunningly alienated the Hearts of the People from his Father.

*So Absalom stole the Hearts of the Men of Israel.*] Robbed his Father of the Affections of the People, and possessed himself of them: Some admiring his Beauty and Gallantry; others his Courtesy and Civility; others being taken with his magnificent Promises of the noble things he would do, if he were their King. Just as *Virgil* saith in Book 7. of his *Æneids*, that *Turnus* drew the Hearts of some to follow him in the Wars, because he was a most graceful Person; others, because he was descended from an ancient Royal Race; and others were moved by the noble Acts he had done, *Ver. 473, 474.*

*Hunc decus egregium formæ movet, atque juventæ  
Hunc Atavi Reges, hunc clavis dextera factis.*

Thus *Absalom* was young and wonderfully beautiful, descended from Kings by his Father and Mother's side; and tho' he had done no great things, yet boasted of what he would do, when he had opportunity. *Ludov. de Dieu* thinks there is a peculiar Meaning in this Phrase, that he drew their Affections to him, concealing in the mean time his Intentions. Upon *John. x. 24.*

Ver. 7. *And it came to pass after forty Years,*] One would think; that in the Copy which *Josephus* used; it was written *arba*, four, not *arba'im*, forty Years: For his Words are; μετὰ δὲ τὴν τῷ πατρὶ κατὰλλαγὴν τεσσαρῶν ἐτῶν ἤδη παραλελυθῶν, four Years after his Father was reconciled to him. But there are no Warrants now for this reading; but the forty Years here mentioned are not to be understood, as if this happened after *David* had reigned forty Years; that is, in the last Year of his Reign; for he was now very vigorous, which he was not a little before he died. But as our great Primate of *Ireland* in his *Annals* understands it, forty Years after *David* was anointed by *Samuel*, that is, when he was threescore Years old, ten Years before he died. Then his Son conspired against him between the Feast of the Passover and Pentecost; as some gather from *Barzillai's* presenting him with parched Corn and new Fruits, when he fled from *Absalom*, xvii. 28. And so *Strigelius*. But the *Talmudists* in *Sedar Olam*, and other Books, will have these forty Years to commence from the time that the *Israelites* asked a King to reign over them. And after all, *Abarbinel* is of opinion, that the plainest Sense is after forty Years of *David's* Reign; so that it was about the latter end of his Life, when this great Calamity befel him, though not in the very last Year of it. For it is not said in the fortieth Year, but about the end of forty Years. See *Buxtorf. Anticritica*, p. 1004.

*That Absalom said unto the King, I pray thee, let me go and pay my Vow, which I have vowed unto the LORD, in Hebron.*] Now he pretends Religion, as before he did the publick Good.

Ver. 8. *For thy Servant vowed a Vow, while I abode at Geshur in Syria, saying, If the LORD will bring me again indeed to Jerusalem, then will I serve the LORD.*] With a solemn Sacrifice.

Ver. 9. *And the King said unto him, Go in peace.*] It is much he should dismiss him without any Suspicion, when he had deferred so long to perform this Vow, and made such court to the People, as he could not but be informed.

*So he arose and went to Hebron.*] Which was an high Place, where they were wont to sacrifice 'till the Temple was built. And it being the Place of his Birth, where the Royal Seat had been in the beginning of *David's* Reign, he thought it the most commodious City, next *Jerusalem*, for his purpose.

Ver. 10. *And Absalom sent Spies throughout all the Tribes of Israel,*] To try how the People stood affected to him.

*Saying, as soon as you hear the Sound of the Trumpet, then ye shall say, Absalom reigneth in Hebron.*] This was the Signal which was to be given, that they should take Arms. For as soon as they heard the Sound of the Trumpet (which he took care should be blown in all the Tribes) these Spies were to proclaim that *Absalom* was crowned in *Hebron*; whereupon, all his Partakers, it is likely, shouted, *God save King Absalom.*

Ver. 11. *And with Absalom went two hundred Men out of Jerusalem that were called,*] Invited by him to feast with him upon his Sacrifice. And it is likely they were principal Persons of the City, whom he drew in, to avoid Suspicion.



*And they went in their simplicity, and they knew not any thing.]* Of his Design; but went only to wait upon him, as the King's Son, who did them the honour to invite them to a holy Feast. Among these two hundred Men, the *Jews* fancy were all those of the grand *Sanhedrin*; who thought they had been called by *David's* Order to attend his Son. For which there is no ground; tho' *Mr. Selden* has produced a great deal out of the *Talmudists* concerning this matter, *L. 2. de Synedrui, Cap. 16.* But I have shewn elsewhere, there was no such *Sanhedrin* in these times.

*Bartenora* upon *Sota* hath a Conceit, that *Absalom* begged of the King (for he had stolen his Heart before he stole the People's) that he would grant him liberty, under his Hand, to choose two Persons whom he liked best, to be his Companions; which being obtained, he went with this Writing from two to two, 'till he had gathered two hundred; part of which were the Men of the great *Sanhedrin*, whose Examples others followed; all believing they had been warranted by *David* to attend his Son.

Ver. 12. *And Absalom sent for Abitophel the Gilonite, David's Counsellor, from his City, even from Giloh,]* None are more capable to do mischief to Kings, than those that know their Secrets, having been of the Privy-Council. And it is supposed by the *Jews*, that *Abitophel* was incensed against *David* for abusing *Bathsheba*, whom they take to have been his Grand-daughter, she being the Daughter of *Eliam*, xi. 3. and *Eliam* being the Son of *Abitophel*. xxiii. 34.

*While he offered Sacrifices:]* Or rather, After he had offered Sacrifices, while he sat at Dinner, he sent for him to come to him.

*And the Conspiracy was strong; for the People increased continually with Absalom.]* Most of which, it is likely, intended no harm at the first, but came merely to do honour to the King's Son, and to partake of his Bounty. Nay, *Abarbinel* is of opinion, that neither *Absalom*, nor the Elders of *Israel*, nor the rest of the People, who were misled by them, had any Intention to divest *David* of his Crown and Dignity, much less to take away his Life; but only to substitute *Absalom* as a Coadjutor to him, for the executing of the Royal Authority during *David's* Life, and to be his Successor after his Death. And indeed, as it was very monstrously unnatural in *Absalom* to design the Destruction of such a kind Father, so it is not very probable that he should gain such a Number as he had, to assist him in such a villanous Enterprize. And yet, notwithstanding this, *David* looked upon this as a Treason against his Life, as appears from ver. 14. and xvi. 11. because he knew, whatsoever they intended, they would be carried further, tho' they meant no more than *Abarbinel* supposes. And more than that, if this Opinion of his were true, it is evident, they themselves did proceed so far as to design (contrary to their first Intentions) to kill *David* for their own greater Security. For so *Abitophel* advised, and they all consented to it, xvii. 2, 4. which shews how dangerous it is to go out of the right Way; for they do not know into what Precipices they may fall. And it should be a Warning to all

Men, never to begin any thing that is wrong, which may lead them to commit that in the Issue, which they abhorred at the first; when they find they cannot be safe in one Wickedness, unless they commit a greater.

Ver. 13. *And there came a Messenger unto David, saying, The Hearts of the Men of Israel are after Absalom.]* Some of the two hundred Men, who went innocently along with him from *Jerusalem*, it is likely, sent this Intelligence; which did not come presently: But when the Conspiracy was plain and open, by a great Concourse of People to him; and the Elders of *Israel*, and the military Men, (who are called all *Israel*, as *Fortunatus Sacchus* thinks) declared for him.

Ver. 14. *And David said unto all his Servants that were with him at Jerusalem, Arise, let us flee; for we shall not else escape from Absalom:]* Tho' *Jerusalem*, at least the Fort of *Sion*, was a strong Place, yet they could not have time to lay in Provision to endure a Siege: And beside, he was not willing to be cooped up there; but chose rather to go into the Country, where he hoped to find Friends and Followers.

*Make speed to depart, lest he overtake us suddenly, and bring evil upon us, and smite the City with the Edge of the Sword.]* He knew *Absalom* would lose no time to accomplish his End; and therefore requires them immediately to be gone, and prevent a Surprise. He was desirous also to preserve *Jerusalem* from being sacked, being the Royal City, upon which he had bestowed much Cost.

Ver. 15. *And the King's Servants said unto the King, Behold, thy Servants are ready to do whatsoever my Lord the King shall appoint.]* One seems to have spoken in the Name of the whole Court: And it was some comfort to him, that he had a Company of such faithful Servants about him, as were ready to execute whatsoever he commanded.

Ver. 16. *And the King went forth, and all his Household after him:]* In the Hebrew, the Words are, *All his Household at his feet.* Which shews that he went on foot, and would not make use of his Mule; being in a mournful State, and desirous to move his People's Compassion to him.

*And the King left ten Women that were Concubines, to keep the House.]* For their Sex; and their Quality, might be thought to be a sufficient Protection to them. What became of his Wives is not here related; it is probable they went along with him, to take care of him, as the other were left to take care of the House.

Ver. 17. *And the King went forth, and all the People after him,]* That is, all the People of *Jerusalem*, who were well-affected to him.

*And tarried in a place that was far off.]* At a good distance from the City, where, it is likely, he put the People that came out confusedly after him into good Order, and waited to see what other Friends would come to him.

Ver. 18. *And all his Servants passed on beside him;]* His household Servants, I suppose, marched on both hands of him.



*All the Gethites, and all the Pelethites,]* Who these were, I have shewn at large upon viii. 18. and it is possible they now brought up the rear.

*And all the Gittites, six hundred Men, which came after him from Gath, passed on before the King.]* These marched in the Front of his little Army; but who they were, 'tis hard to tell; for we read nothing of them before. Some take them to have been Profelytes born in Gath of the Philistines, who came with Ittai to David; being attracted by the Fame of his Piety, and happy Successes. Others take them to be Jews, who had fled to David in his Exile, when he was at Gath, and accompanied him ever after, not only in the time of Saul's Persecution, but after he came to the Crown of Judah and Israel.

Ver. 19. *Then the King said to Ittai the Gittite, Wherefore goest thou also with us?* He seems to have been the Commander of those six hundred Men before-mentioned. And the Jews make him the Son of Achish King of Gath; who out of Religion and Friendship came to David.

*Return to thy place,]* That is, to Jerusalem.

*And abide with the King:]* For so Absalom was by Ufurpation.

*For thou art a Stranger, and an Exile.]* Who upon that account might hope to be civilly treated; at least being none of David's Family, and a new Comer, he thought it was not fit to engage him in their Broils.

Ver. 20. *Whereas thou comest to us but yesterday, should I make thee this day go up and down with us?* He was newly settled at Jerusalem; and therefore David thought it unreasonable he should be so soon unsettled again.

*Seeing I go whither I may,]* Especially since he knew not whither he should betake himself for safety; and therefore would not have Ittai expose himself to such Uncertainties. See concerning this Phrase, 1 Sam. xxiii. 13.

*Return thou, and take back thy Brethren:]* Some understand by his Brethren, the six hundred Men that came from Gath: But it is not probable David would part with such a Guard as they were, in this time of extreme Danger, unless they had desired to be gone; therefore he rather means those Persons that attended him, or were of his Family, who came to sojourn with him in Judæa.

*Mercy and Truth be with thee.]* In the Hebrew, the Words are, *With thee Mercy and Truth.* Which some take to signify, *Thou art a right honest and good Man.* But our Translation seems better, which makes them a Form of a Blessing, or Prayer to God, that he would requite the Kindness and Fidelity of Ittai, by shewing Mercy to him, and faithfully fulfilling his Promises made to those who came to put their Trust in him.

Ver. 21. *And Ittai answered the King, and said, As the LORD liveth, and as my Lord the King liveth, surely in whatsoever Place my Lord the King shall be, whether in Death or in Life, even there also will thy Servant be.]* A marvellous Fidelity in a Stranger, when a Son was a Rebel against him. And David's Humanity is no less admirable in offering to dis-

miss him so freely, yea earnestly pressing him to return, because he was a Stranger; though he was in the greatest need of all the Assistance he could get to defend him.

Ver. 22. *And David said to Ittai, Go, and pass over.]* There was not a word more to be said, now he had sworn he would not leave him.

*And Ittai the Gittite passed over,]* The Brook Kedron, as it follows in the next Verse.

*He, and all his Men, and all the little ones that came with him.]* This shews that his whole Family were come, as I noted before, to sojourn in this Country.

Ver. 23. *And all the Country]* About Jerusalem,

*Wept with a loud Voice,]* Being extremely afflicted to see their Prince, under whom they had lived in great Peace and Prosperity, reduced to such Extremities.

*And all the People passed over:]* All that continued faithful to David in those parts.

*The King also himself passed over the Brook Kedron,]* He staid 'till the last, that he might take notice who appeared for him, as they passed over before him.

*And all the People passed over towards the way of the Wilderness.]* And when they were over, they marched through the Wilderness, that lay between Jerusalem and Jericho.

Ver. 24. *And lo, Zadok also and all the Levites went with him, bearing the Ark of the Covenant of the LORD,]* That is, all the Kohathites that were at Jerusalem, whose Office it was to carry the Ark, and take care of it.

*And they set down the Ark of God:]* When they came to David, they set down the Ark in the Place where he was, to signify that God would be with him, and accompany him; and that the People might thereby be excited to follow him, who had the Token of the Divine Presence with him.

*And Abiathar went up,]* To the Top of the Mount Olivet.

*'Till all the People had done passing out of the City.]* From the Mount he could behold, when the People, who would follow David, were come out of the City. And then, I suppose, he came down, and desired that the Ark and the King might move up the Hill also.

Ver. 25. *And the King said unto Zadok,]* The Talmudists have a fancy that the King spake to Zadok, not to Abiathar, because he had removed Abiathar from the High-priesthood: Upon this account, that he consulting by Urim and Thummim, God gave no Answer; but when Zadok inquired, God did answer. Whereupon David understood the Spirit of God was departed from Abiathar, and therefore turned him out of his Office. Which is notoriously false; for he was not turned out till the Reign of Solomon.

*Carry back the Ark into the City:]* For he did not think it decent to have it wander about with him he knew not whither; as Abarbinet observes: And perhaps he thought God might be angry with him, should he let it be carried out of its place: As if he trusted in the Ark, which was but the Token of his Presence, more than he did in God himself, who had preserved him



him in the Persecution of Saul, when he had no Ark with him.

*If I find favour in the eyes of the LORD, he will bring me again; and shew me both it, and his Habitation.]* It was not for the Honour of the Ark, as I said, to take it out of the Place which he had made for it; which he calls God's Habitation, because there he dwelt by this special Token of his Presence in it. And if he had a Favour to him, he knew he could preserve him without the Ark, as well as with it; and bring him again to worship him in his proper Place.

Ver. 26. *But if he say, I have no delight in thee; behold, here am I, let him do to me as seems good in his sight.]* He was very sensible of his own ill Deservings; and humbly submits to whatsoever Punishment, even the heaviest, that God would think fit to inflict upon him.

Ver. 27. *And the King said also unto Zadok the Priest,]* He is frequently called by *Josephus*, the High-priest: Particularly in *Lib. 7. Antiq. Cap. 6.* where he saith David made him Ἀρχιερεῖς μετ' Ἀβιάθαρ, *Φίλος γὰρ ἦν αὐτῷ*, High-priest together with Abiathar: for he was his Friend. But hereby we are only to understand that he was the Sagan, as the Jews call the Vicar or Deputy of the High-priest; who is called the Second Priest, 2 Kings xxv. 18. See *Selden de Success. in Pontif. Ebraeor. Lib. 1. Cap. 4.*

*Art thou not a Seer?]* A very wise Man, or a Prophet, who could not but discern in what state things were likely to be, and that he might serve David better by staying in Jerusalem than going along with him.

*Return into the City in peace, and your two Sons with you, Abimaaz thy Son, and Jonathan the Son of Abiathar.]* This was another Reason for sending back the Ark: for as it was not fit to keep it with him, and the Priests and Levites also to attend it, so they might do him more Service elsewhere than in his Camp.

Ver. 28. *See, I will tarry in the Plain of the Wilderness,]* He put an intire Confidence in them, that they would not betray him, by acquainting them where he meant to rest a while, to wait for Intelligence from them.

*'Till there come word from you to certify me.]* What Absalom designed; and accordingly he intended to steer his course.

Ver. 29. *Zadok therefore and Abiathar carried the Ark of God again to Jerusalem; and they tarried there.]* Mention being made both here, and also ver. 33. of Zadok before Abiathar, it seems to intimate some Preference to him, and to justify what *Josephus* saith, that he was the King's Friend; and being constantly with him was more honoured than Abiathar.

Ver. 30. *And David went up the Ascent of Mount Olivet, and wept as he went up, and had his Head covered, and went barefoot:]* Dejected, as *Salvian* glosses, into the Condition of a Servant; or rather in the Habit of a Mourner. For covering the Head was a Token of Shame and Confusion, and great Trouble; and so was going barefoot. Which was used on the great Fast, or Day of Expiation, as we find in *Codex Joma, Cap. 8.* tho' the Doctors say, they might put on Woollen or Linnen Socks, but no Leathern Shoes. And this was observed also in Funerals, as *Buxtorfius* shews in his *Synagoga Ju-*

*daica, Cap. 49.* which was a Custom in the days of *Ezekiel*, xxiv. 17. Nor were the Heathen Strangers to it; but in times of great Calamity went barefoot, as that excellent Person *Ezekiel Spanhemius* observes in his Notes upon *Callimachus* his Hymn *ad Cererem*, ver. 125.

*And all the People that were with him, covered every Man his Head, and they went up, weeping as they went up.]* Going bare-foot also, it is most probable, as the King did; whose Example they followed.

Ver. 31. *And one told David, saying, Abitophel is among the Conspirators with Absalom.]* This touched him very nearly, because he was a very wise Man, and one whom he took for his Friend, *Psalms* lv. 13.

*And David said, O LORD, I pray thee, turn the Counsel of Abitophel into Foolishness.]* He prays that he might give foolish Counsel; or that it might be contemned and looked upon as foolish; or that it might miscarry in the Execution.

Ver. 32. *And it came to pass, that when David was come to the Top of the Mount, where he worshipped God,]* Looking towards the Ark in the House of God; which he could see from the Top of the Mount.

*That Hushai the Archite came to meet him,]* There was a City in the Tribe of Ephraim called Archi, *Josh. xvi. 2.* where this Person; in all likelihood, was born and bred, and coming to Jerusalem, became one of David's Privy Council: Being famous for Wisdom; otherwise Absalom would not have so readily entertained him, and admitted him into his Secrets.

*With his Coat rent, and Earth upon his head:]* Which were Expressions of great Sorrow. *Job. Braunius* hath demonstrated, the Garment called *Ketonab* was round, like our Surplices, with Sleeves to put the Hands and Arms into it. Which was worn by great Persons, not only among the Jews, but the Egyptians, Tyrians, and Assyrians, he observes, (*Lib. 2. de Vestitu Sacerd. Hebr. Cap. 2. Sect. 13, 14.*) which may incline us to a Belief, that Hushai was no mean Man, but a Person of Quality.

Ver. 33. *Unto whom David said, If thou pass along with me, then thou wilt be a burden to me.]* For he was not provided with Maintenance for his own Family; and Hushai being no Soldier, but a Counsellor, could not be so useful to him in the Field, as he might be at the Court.

Ver. 34. *But if thou return to the City, and say unto Absalom, I will be thy Servant, O King;]* So he was to call him, because he had taken upon him that Title.

*As I have been thy Father's Servant hitherto; so will I now also be thy Servant:]* He would have him pretend he would be as faithful to him as he had been to David; and it was very well known he had done him good Service. This was not honest; but it was according to the Policy practised in those days, and indeed in all Ages. Which *Procopius Gazæus* approves so far as to say, that a Lye which is told for a good End, is equivalent to Truth. But I dare not justify such Doctrine; though what Hushai undertook to do, was not to get Money, or to do others hurt, but to preserve a good King, and a Prophet, and a Friend.



*Then mayest thou for me defeat the Counsel of Abiathar.]* God he thought had sent this Man, in answer to his Prayer (*ver. 31.*) if he would but follow his Direction.

*Ver. 35. Hast thou not with thee there, Zadok and Abiathar the Priests? therefore it shall be, that whatsoever thou shalt hear out of the King's House, thou shalt tell it to Zadok and Abiathar the Priests.]* Whom he looked upon as trusty Persons, and faithful to his Interest; and so they proved.

*Ver. 36. Behold, they have there with them their two Sons, Abimaaz Zadok's Son, and Jonathan Abiathar's Son: and by them ye shall send unto me every thing that ye can hear.]* They were not with their Fathers in Jerusalem; but lay close in a Place not far off, ready to carry any Message that was sent by them. See xvii. 17.

*Ver. 37. So Hushai David's Friend came into the City, and Absalom came into Jerusalem.]* Where Hushai, I suppose, waited for his coming: having got thither before him, and so ordered his Affairs, that it was not known he had been to offer his Service to David: Or, those that knew it, out of reverence to him, and affection to David, did not discover it.

## CHAP. XVI.

*Verse 1. AND when David was a little past the Top of the Hill,] viz. Mount Olivet, xv. 30.*

*Behold, Ziba, the Servant of Mephibosheth met him with a couple of Asses saddled, and upon them two hundred Loaves of Bread, and an hundred Bunches of Raisins, and an hundred of Summer-fruits, and a Bottle of Wine.]* They put their Wine into Bottles, or Bags; some of which were large Vessels, and contained a great deal of Wine. Such no doubt was this, which had Liquor in it, proportionable to the rest of the Present.

*Ver. 2. And the King said unto Ziba, What meanest thou by these? And Ziba said, The Asses are for the King's Household to ride on,] For his Wives and Children, if they were weary with travelling on foot; as they now did.*

*And the Bread and Summer-fruits for the young Men to eat,] For the Refreshment of the King's Attendants.*

*And the Wine, that such as be faint in the Wilderness may drink.]* This argues great Consideration of David's Condition: To which he suited his Present; which in a Wilderness came very seasonably, and was very noble; perhaps the Bunches of Raisins were intended for David's own Support.

*Ver. 3. And the King said, And where is thy Master's Son?] He desired, I suppose, to know whether this Present was from himself, or from Mephibosheth.*

*And Ziba said unto the King, Behold, he abideth at Jerusalem: for he said, To-day shall the House of Israel restore me the Kingdom of my Father.]* This seems to be a Fiction, but well contrived: for the Family of David being so broken, he might think it probable the Crown would fall to him.

*Ver. 4. Then said the King to Ziba, Behold, thine are all that pertained unto Mephibosheth.]* We read ix. 2. that Ziba was but a Servant (see there) but now David makes him a Freeholder;

giving him a great Estate: Which, if he said true, was forfeited to the King for Treason, as it had been before in the time of Ishbosheth, and thereupon given to Mephibosheth. But in this David seems to have been too credulous, and rashly condemned Mephibosheth before he heard what he could say for himself; but he imagin'd, perhaps, that Ziba durst not tell so notorious a Lye, which might shortly be disproved. And beside, a Man that comes to relieve another who is in great distress, easily wins his good Opinion.

*And Ziba said, I humbly beseech thee, that I may find grace in thy sight, my Lord, O King.]* He pretends to value the King's Favour more than the Gift he had bestowed upon him.

*Ver. 5. And when King David came to Baburim,] A City in the Tribe of Benjamin (xix. 16.) into the Territories of which David was now come; though not as yet into the Town itself, as appears from ver. 14. The Targum calls it Almoth, which is of the same signification with Baburim; the one importing young Men, and the other Youth.*

*Behold, thence came out a Man of the Family (of the House of Saul, whose Name was Shimei the Son of Gera: he came forth, and cursed still as he went.)* Out of an inveterate Hatred to David; whom he looked upon as the great Enemy of his Family.

*Ver. 6. And he cast stones at David,] In contempt of him: Or, as some fancy, to reproach him with the Adultery he had committed; for which he deserved to have been stoned.*

*And at all the Servants of King David:]* This shews it was done only in contempt of them; as if they had been a Company of Dogs.

*And all the People, and all the mighty Men were on his right hand, and on his left.]* He was under such a strong Guard, that Shimei's Rage was little less than Madness; for he could not hurt David, but might have been immediately killed himself.

*Ver. 7. And thus said Shimei when he cursed, Come out, come out,] As much as if he had said, get thee out of the Kingdom, from whence thou deservest to be expelled. So the Words are in the Hebrew; Go out, go out: The doubling of which Words express his vehement Detestation of him.*

*Thou Man of Blood, thou Son of Belial:]* So they called all those that made their Will their Law. But R. Levi Ben Gerson thinks he hath respect in these last Words to the Adultery committed with Bathsheba; as in the first, he might have to the killing of Uriah.

*Ver. 8. The LORD hath returned upon thee all the Blood of the House of Saul,] This was perfect Railing: For David had shed none of their Blood; but he maliciously imputes to him the Death of Abner, and of Ishbosheth.*

*In whose stead thou hast reigned,] In effect, he calls him an Usurper.*

*And the LORD hath delivered thy Kingdom into the hand of Absalom thy Son: and behold, thou art taken in thy Mischief, because thou art a bloody Man.]* He still vomits out the same Reproaches, with a most wicked Spirit, which the Greeks call ἐπιχαριζομένη; rejoicing in Iniquity; to see Absalom so prosperous in his horrid Rebellion.

Ver. 9.



Ver. 9. *Then said Abishai, the Son of Zeruiab, unto the King, Why should this dead Dog curse my Lord the King?*] See iii. 8.

*Let me go over, I pray thee, and take off his Head.*] There was admirable Discipline observed in this small Army, none of which durst stir without David's Order, or Leave. And this, according to human Reason, was a just Motion which Abishai made: He being very near of kin to David; as Shimei was to Saul, and therefore a fit Person to stop the mouth of such a mad Dog, by cutting off his Head.

Ver. 10. *And the King said, What have I to do with you, ye Sons of Zeruiab?*] He speaks this with some Indignation; and reflects upon Joab, as well as Abishai, who had been the Occasion of these Reproaches:

*So let him curse, because the LORD hath said unto him, Curse David.*] God neither bid him curse David, nor excited him to it; but finding his Heart full of Malice and Rage, gave him an Opportunity to vent it, as a Punishment unto David. Unto which the good King humbly submits; looking upon it as coming from the hand of God, who delivered him up to this Contempt. And in this, David's Virtue was admirable: For it is not an easy thing to stifle all Motions to Revenge, when it is easy to take it, and there is an high Provocation to it. It is an Observation indeed of Cicero's (*Orat. de Aruspicio responsis*) that *perditi hominis profligatque maledictis, nullius gloria dignitasque violatur*; by the Reproaches of a wicked, profligate Fellow, no Man's Glory or Dignity is hurt or violated. But David doth not scorn these Curses, out of meer Greatness of Spirit, as coming out of the mouth of a base Wretch, not worthy to be regarded; but acknowledges the Justice of them, and bears them with a singular Patience, out of Humility and Reverence to God, who had so ordered it.

*Who shall then say, Why hast thou done so?*] He doth not mean, who should ask Shimei such a Question, but who should take upon him to find fault with God, who had just reason to suffer this? Tho' Grotius thinks David excuses Shimei in these Words. For speaking concerning the Respect that is to be used to Kings, in not giving them publick Reproaches; he excepts those which are given by a Prophet, who had a special Command from God for it. Upon which account he saith, when David was openly upbraided by Shimei as a Murderer, he had no Excuse to make for him but this, that perhaps God had commanded him to do it; shewing that this alone could make it lawful to speak evil of the King, if God, in a special manner enjoined it. *Lib. de Imperio Summar. Potest. circa Sacra, Cap. 9. Sect. 19.*

Ver. 11. *And David said unto Abishai, and to all his Servants, Behold, my Son, which came forth of my Bowels, seeketh my Life: how much more may this Benjamite do it? Let him alone, and let him curse; for the LORD hath bidden him.*] His Passion seems not to have been at all stirred by this impotent Railer, and endeavours to quiet the Spirits of others; calmly reasoning himself and them, with admirable Consideration, into an humble Patience: For what were the Revilings of a Stranger, to the murderous Intentions

of a Son? And how could he withstand God, who inflicted this Punishment upon him for his Sins?

Ver. 12. *It may be the LORD will look upon my Affliction, and that the LORD will requite me good for his cursing this day.*] He durst not be confident, being conscious of his ill Deservings; but he had some hope, that God would be as gracious to him, as this Man was malicious.

Ver. 13. *And as David and his Men went by the way,*] Taking no notice of him.

*Shimei went along on the side of the Hill over-against him, and cursed as he went, and threw stones at him, and cast dust.*] Neglect of him made him more outrageous; which gave David occasion to exercise the greatest Patience, under so long a Vexation.

Ver. 14. *And the King, and all the People that were with him, came weary,*] Not only with their Journey, but with Grief.

*And refreshed themselves there.*] At Baburim, ver. 5.

Ver. 15. *And Absalom and all the People of the Men of Israel came to Jerusalem, and Abitophel with him.*] As soon as David was got into the Wilderness, he took possession of Jerusalem, and the King's Palace.

Ver. 16. *And it came to pass that when Hushai the Archite, David's Friend, was come unto Absalom,*] Among others, that came to welcome him to Jerusalem.

*That Hushai said unto Absalom, God save the King, God save the King.*] He not only owned his Authority, but with great affection seemed to desire its Countenance. Which was an egregious piece of Flattery and Dissimulation.

Ver. 17. *And Absalom said, Is this thy Kindness to thy Friend? why wentest thou not with thy Friend?*] Absalom had not so little Sense, as not to consider, that no Man ought to forsake a Friend in his distress: Though at the same time he did not reflect, how he had not only forsaken, but forced away his own Father. So that one might have said to him, *Is this thy Duty to thy Father?*

Ver. 18. *And Hushai said unto Absalom, Nay, but whom the LORD and this People and all the Men of Israel choose, his will I be, and with him will I abide.*] The Voice of the People he pretends to look upon as the Voice of God; and that he was bound to prefer the publick Good before his own private Obligations or Affections.

Ver. 19. *And again, Whom shall I serve? should I not serve in the presence of his Son? As I have served in the presence of thy Father, so will I be in thy presence.*] He gives a second Reason; that he should not offend against David, in giving good Counsel to his Son.

Ver. 20. *Then said Absalom to Abitophel, Give counsel among you what we shall do.*] I suppose Abitophel was made President of the Council (as we now speak) who required the rest to deliver their Opinions after he had delivered his.

Ver. 21. *And Abitophel said unto Absalom, Go in unto thy Father's Concubines, which he hath left to keep the House.*] It appears, by this, he was a profane Politician, who did not regard by what means, how wicked soever, he compassed his ends. The Hebrews think also, that by this Counsel



Counsel *Ahitophel* gratified his own Revenge, because *David* had lain with his Grand-daughter, as I before noted.

*And all Israel shall hear that thou art abhorred of thy Father,]* That he and his Father were become irreconcilable Enemies. For *Ahitophel* involved him in a greater Sin than that for which he killed *Amnon* : It not being so foul a Crime to lie with his Sister, as it was to commit Incest with his Father's Wives.

*Then shall the Hands of all that are with thee be strong.]* When they were possessed with an Opinion, that the Father and Son could never come to an Accommodation. Which might have been hoped between such near Relations ; and then the People had been in an ill Condition ; for *David* might not have been reconciled to them, tho' he was to his Son. But after this detestable Crime, there was no likelihood that they would ever be Friends again.

Ver. 22. *So they spread Absalom a Tent upon the top of the House, and Absalom went in to his Father's Concubines, in the sight of all Israel.]* Who were strangely depraved, in that none of them should cry out against such abominable Wickedness.

Ver. 23. *And the Counsel of Ahitophel which he counselled in those days, was as if a Man had inquired at the Oracle of God:]* It was so sure and safe, that it was commonly followed, without any doubting of the Success. Such was this Counsel which he now gave ; for there was no greater Danger to him and all *Israel*, than for *Absalom* to repent, and submit to his Father : therefore he endeavoured, as I said, to make them irreconcilable, by doing his Father the highest Injury. Such was this to which he advised, as we learn by *Jacob's* Resentment of it in his Son *Reuben*, and many other Examples, for which I refer to *Grotius*. He made the Breach therefore thus wide, that it might never be healed : For if it had, *David* might have called him and others, in due time, to an account for their Treason.

*So was all the Counsel of Ahitophel, both with David and with Absalom.]* While *David* was in prosperity he gave him faithful Counsel ; but now in his Distress as wisely consulted his Ruin. For as *Procopius Gazæus* observes, *accommodavit se rebus præsentibus*. He was one of those who complied with the present State of things ; and now, with great reason, advised to make haste to dispatch *David* ; fearing lest natural Affection should work a Reconciliation, and he should be punished for his Perfidiousness.

## C H A P. XVII.

Verse 1. **M**oreover, *Ahitophel* said unto *Absalom*, *Let me now choose out twelve thousand Men,]* Out of the whole Multitude of the *Israelites* that followed *Absalom* : A thousand choice Men, I suppose, out of each Tribe ; for he knew it would take up too much time to gather all the Forces of *Israel* together, and give *David* an Opportunity to escape.

*And I will arise and pursue after David.]* It seems he was a Soldier, as well as a Counsellor : Or at least, he thought his Counsel so sure of being successful, that he undertook himself to

put it in execution. He was afraid also, that if *Absalom* should command them himself, natural Affection might make him spare his Father, and not take away his Life ; or perhaps work an Agreement between them ; and so leave him in danger, as I said before, to be called to an account for his Rebellion.

*This Night]* The next, I suppose, after *David* went away : For Speed was the main thing on which he depended.

Ver. 2. *And I will come upon him while he is yet weary]* With a long March.

*And weak banded,]* Before he had got more Forces together.

*And I will make him afraid:]* Strike a Terror into him, by this sudden Attack ; and in the Night, when he was ill provided.

*And all the People that are with him shall flee,]* Finding how unable they were to resist such a Force.

*And I will smite the King only.]* And spare all the People, whom he would not pursue.

Ver. 3. *And I will bring back all the People unto thee:]* By this means he doubted not to make an end of the War presently : And to bring all *Israel* to be his Subjects.

*The Man whom thou seekest, is as if all returned:]* By smiting *David*, with whom alone was his Quarrel, the whole Nation would come in to him : There being no other, to whom they should submit, when he was dead.

*So all the People shall be in peace.]* Thus they should have a Peace without War ; by taking and killing him, which would preserve both the People which were with *Absalom*, and those with *David*. They should all be saved, and he alone destroyed.

Ver. 4. *And the Saying pleased Absalom well, and all the Elders of Israel.]* For it was very sound Advice : It being dangerous to deliberate long about such wicked Designs, which must be executed speedily : So *Tacitus* well observes, *Scelera impetu, bona fide consilia mora valescunt* ; Wicked Counsels prevail by sudden Violence, but good by Delays.

Ver. 5. *Then said Absalom, Call now Hushai the Archite also, and let us hear likewise what he saith.]* It was a Proverb, it is likely, before *Solomon's* time, that in a multitude of Counsellors there is safety ; by which *Absalom* resolved to govern himself. But the Providence of God is chiefly to be here noted : who made *Absalom* irresolute and doubtful, even in that Counsel which was approved by all the Elders of *Israel*, and was evidently the wisest that could be given.

Ver. 6. *And when Hushai was come to Absalom, Absalom spake unto him, saying, Ahitophel hath spoken after this manner:]* Relating what he had said, ver. 2, 3.

*Shall we do after his saying?] Follow his Advice.*

*If not ; speak thou.]* He gives him full liberty to speak freely, if he were of another Opinion : which he might deliver without offence, either to him or any body else.

Ver. 7. *And Hushai said unto Absalom, The Counsel that Ahitophel hath given, is not good at this time.]* He confessed him to be a Man of extraordinary Judgment ; but no Man is wise at all times : And he thought now he was in an Error, for the following Reason.

Ver.



Ver. 8. *For (said Hushai) thou knowest thy Father, and his Men, that they be mighty Men,]* Old Soldiers, who are aware of the Danger wherein they are, and will provide against it, that they be not easily surprized.

*And they be chafed in their Minds,]* So extremely provoked and exasperated, that it would be dangerous to fall upon them with so small an Army as *Ahitopel* proposed. For such desperate Persons would sell their Lives at a dear rate.

*As a Bear robbed of her Whelps in the Field:]* All Men know that a Bear is a very fierce Creature: And good Authors, particularly *Aristotle*, observes, that She-Bears are fiercer than the Male, especially when they have Whelps to take care of, as the same Philosopher writes, *Lib. 6. Hist. Animal. C. 18.* But most of all enraged, when their Whelps are killed, or taken away from them; which is mentioned often in Holy Scripture, *Prov. xvii. 12. Hosea xiii. 8.* where *Kimchi* observes, that they bring forth their Whelps wrapt up in a very thick Skin, which it costs them a great deal of pains to free them from; and therefore grieves them more, when they find they have laboured in vain. See *Bochart* in his *Hierozyicon*, *P. 1. Lib. 3. Cap. 9.*

*And thy Father is a Man of War, and will not lodge with the People.]* Of such Experience in warlike Affairs, that as his Men would defend him stoutly, and with great Fury, so when all was done, it was probable *Ahitopel* would not know where to find him; for great Captains having disposed their Force to the best advantage, and set their Guards, oftentimes retire themselves from the Camp, and lodge in some secret Place.

Ver. 9. *Behold he is hid now in some Pit, or in some other Place:]* Some Cave, or other lurking-place; as he was in the days of *Saul*, who was never able to catch him.

*And it shall come to pass, when some of them]* That is, of *Absalom's* Forces.

*Be overthrown at the first,]* As might well be supposed, if *David's* Men should come on a sudden upon them, out of an Ambush, and put the first Ranks into disorder, if not make a Slaughter among them.

*That whosoever hears it, will say, There is a Slaughter among the People that follow Absalom.]* This News would presently be spread through the whole Army, and Fear make them think the Slaughter greater than it was.

Ver. 10. *And he also that is valiant, whose Heart is as the Heart of a Lion, shall utterly melt:]* For Men are apt to conjecture of Successes by the Beginning; and it is a great Encouragement to Men to fight when they prosper at the first Onset; and mightily disheartens those that are beaten. Lions are not only very strong, but very furious Creatures; and therefore valiant Men are said to have the Hearts of Lions, and the Faces of Lions, (*1 Chron. xii. 8.*) and the Army of Locusts to have the Teeth of Lions (*Joel i. 6.*) But no Men are so terrible, but they may be terrified, when they are suddenly and unexpectedly surprized by Men as terrible as themselves, and far more incensed and justly enraged.

*Vossius* thinks that the word *Lebi*, which in Hebrew signifies a *Lion*, comes from the word *Leb*, which in that Language signifies the Heart; as much as to say, *Cordatus*, an hearty Creature, full of Courage: Whence the Greeks call a valiant and generous Man, *Συμολέοντα* and *λεοντόθυμον*. See him, *Lib. 3. de Orig. & Progr. Idol. Cap. 52.* and *Bochartus* in his *Hierozyicon*, *P. 1. Lib. 3. Cap. 2.*

*For all Israel know that thy Father is a mighty Man, and they that be with him are valiant Men.]* Who would pursue any Advantage with the greatest Courage and Resolution.

Ver. 11. *Therefore I counsel, that all Israel be generally gathered unto thee, from Dan even to Beersheba, even as the Sand that is by the Sea in multitude,]* He means all the fighting Men throughout the Country, which were very numerous. In which Advice, his chief Aim was to gain time for *David* to raise an Army by the help of his Friends; for all *Israel* could not presently be gathered together, and put into Order of Battle.

*And that thou go to Battle also in thy own Person.]* Which would encourage the People to fight valiantly, when he was at the head of them; and would win him great Glory, in owing his Victory to his own Conduct, and not to other Mens.

Ver. 12. *And so shall we come upon him in some place where he shall be found; and we will light upon him as the Dew falls upon the ground:]* He compares the Multitude of their Soldiers to the Drops of Dew, which cover the Face of the whole Earth; so that if *David* was in the Field, he could not escape, but he would fall into the hands of some or other of them.

*And of him, and of all the Men that are with him, there shall not be left so much as one.]* For his Army would be so large as to spread itself over all the Country, and ferret *David* and his Men out of all their Holes, by searching every one of them. This Counsel was very plausible to one who relied upon the Greatness of an Host; and *Hushai* was also so cunning as to speak as if he would accompany him.

Ver. 13. *Moreover, if he be got into a City, then shall all Israel bring Ropes to that City, and we will draw it into the River.]* He represents a further Advantage of such a Multitude; that if *David* quitted the Field, and got into the strongest of their Cities, encompassed with high Walls, and a deep Ditch, they were now to begirt it round, and by Ropes put about the Walls, draw them down and all the Houses of the City, into the Ditch that run about it. There was no such thing, that we read of, practised in War; therefore some by *Chabalim* (which we translate *Ropes*) understand *Troops*, or *Bands* of Men, who by Machines drawn with Ropes, could batter down Walls and Houses: or rather, this is a bragging hyperbolic Speech, that they should be so numerous as to be able to do this, if there were no other way to reduce the City.

*Until there be not one small Stone found there.]* Much less any Man remaining there.

Ver. 14. *And Absalom and all the Men of Israel said, The Counsel of Hushai is better than the Counsel*



*Counsel of Abitophel:]* For so it would naturally seem to Men that had a bad Cause, and were cowardly, having nothing but their Numbers to depend upon.

*For the LORD had appointed to defeat the good Counsel of Abitophel, to the intent that God might bring evil upon Absalom.]* But the chief Reason was, that God blinded their Eyes, and infatuated their Judgments, that they could not discern what was best, but take that course which would ruin Absalom. Such is the wonderful over-ruling Providence of God, in more Cases than we are aware of; for, as St. Hilary speaks, concerning the Rage of Hereticks, *Si quantum audet impietas, tantum confuleret prudentia, difficile esset veritatis causam agere.* If Wickedness were as wise and prudent in Counsel, as it is bold and daring in Attempts, it would be hard to maintain a good Cause.

Ver. 15. *Then said Hushai to Zadok and Abiathar the Priests, Thus and thus did Abitophel counsel Absalom and the Elders of Israel; and thus have I counselled.]* He acted the part of a true Friend to David, but not of a trusty Servant to Absalom, whose Counsels he betrayed.

Ver. 16. *Now therefore send quickly, and tell David,]* Carry him this Intelligence with all speed.

*Saying, Lodge not this Night in the Plain of the Wilderness, but speedily pass over;]* The River Jordan.

*Left the King be swallowed up, and all the People that are with him.]* For fear Absalom should change his Resolution, and incline again to the Counsel of Abitophel; who being a Man of great Authority, might persuade him his Advice was the truest.

Ver. 17. *Now Jonathan and Abimaaz staid in Enrogel,]* A Place near Jerusalem (*Josh. xv. 7, 8.*) which the Targum translates the Fuller's Well; because, as Kimchi says, the Fullers there trod their Cloth with their Feet; for he derives Rogel from the word Regel, which signifies a Foot.

*(For they might not be seen to come into the City.)]* Their Fathers charged them to stay in this Place, because it would have been difficult to send them out of the City, without being discovered.

*And a Wench went and told them:]* Pretending, perhaps, to go thither to scour some Cloaths.

*And they went and told King David.]* After a little stop in their way, as it here follows.

Ver. 18. *Nevertheless, a Lad saw them, and told Absalom:]* Some of whose Troopers, who were scouting thereabouts (as Josephus understands it) discovered them before they had gone two Furlongs.

*But they went both of them away quickly, and came into a Man's House at Baburim,]* They suspected they were discovered, and therefore turned out of the publick Road (as Josephus explains it) and made haste to this Village, and perhaps to that Man's House where David refreshed himself, xvi. 5, 14.

*Which had a Well in his Court, whither they went down.]* For at that time of the Year, their Wells in many Places are dry, or had little Water in them. And it would not be easily suspected that they would stay in an open Court.

Ver. 19. *And the Woman took and spread a Covering over the Well's mouth, and spread ground Corn thereon;]* Corn newly thrashed out, which she pretended to dry in the Sun.

*And the thing was not known.]* By this means they lay undiscovered.

Ver. 20. *And when Absalom's Servants]* Who were sent to pursue them.

*Came to the Woman of the House,]* For some had informed them that they had turned this way.

*They said, Where is Abimaaz and Jonathan?]* They were known Persons, being the Sons of the most eminent among the Priests; or, perhaps, they described them to her, so that she could not but know whether two such Persons came thither, or passed that way.

*And the Woman said unto them, They be gone over the Brook of Water.]* Which came, I suppose, from the Fountain of Enrogel. It seems to have been a common Opinion in those days, that these officious Lyes, for the safety of innocent Persons, had no hurt in them; for we find many Instances of them, which cannot be justified. See upon *Josh. ii. 5.*

*And when they had sought them, and could not find them, they returned to Jerusalem.]* For the Woman told them, as Josephus says, that they made no stay at her House; but after they had asked for a little Drink, made haste away; tho' if they pursued them speedily, she believed they might overtake them.

Ver. 21. *And it came to pass after they were departed, they came up out of the Well, and went (and told David,]* As soon as the Pursuers were returned back to Jerusalem.

*And said unto David, Arise, and pass over the Water; for thus hath Abitophel counselled against you.]* And they did not know but he, by his great Wisdom, might over-rule the Counsel of Hushai (with which, no doubt, they also acquainted David) and persuaded Absalom to hearken to his; and then David was in extreme danger.]

Ver. 22. *Then David arose, and all the People that were with him, and they passed over Jordan: by the Morning-light there lacked not one of them that was not gone over Jordan.]* By this it appears, that they passed over in the Night, either at the Fords, or in Boats; and that not one of them miscarried in the Passage, or ran away from him.

Ver. 23. *And when Abitophel saw that his Counsel was not followed,]* Soon after Abimaaz and Jonathan were gone to David, it publicly appeared, that the Counsel of Abitophel was rejected, and Hushai's entertained.

*He saddled his Ass, and arose, and gat him home to his House, to his City, and put his Household in order,]* Settled his Affairs, and disposed of his Estate.

*And hanged himself,]* Being confident that David would get the better of Absalom; and that then he should be put to death for his Treason; which made him choose to be his own Executioner. So we understand it; though some of the Jews will have it that he died of Grief, being choaked with a Quinsy. For it is not likely, they think, so wise a Man as he would hang himself: But being



being full of Anguish, Anger and Vexation (arising not merely from his Pride, which enraged him to see any Man's Counsel preferred to his; but to the Foresight, as I said, of Danger, if *David* prevailed, as he was sure he would) these Passions cast him into so violent a Distemper, that he was strangled by it. And so some interpret the Word *ἀπὸ θυγῶτος*, in *Matth.* xxvii. 5.

And died, and was buried in the Sepulchre of his Father.] Where perhaps he would not have had the Honour to be interred, if he had been executed by *David*.

Ver. 24. *Then David came to Mahanaim:]* A Place in the Tribe of Gad. See Chap. ii. 8. of this Book.

And *Absalom* passed over Jordan, he and all the Men of Israel with him.] As soon as he had gathered them together; which required some time: During which, *David* had Opportunity to strengthen himself, by gathering an Army also. Which was after the Death of *Ahitophel* (who saw what Delays were made by gathering Israel together, and what the Consequence would be) and after Relief was sent him by several Persons: Particularly by *Shobi* of the Children of *Ammon*, ver. 27. Who were Neighbours to this Part of the Country of Israel, though at a good Distance from *Mahanaim*.

Ver. 25. *And Absalom made Amasa Captain of the Host instead of Joab: which Amasa was a Man's Son whose Name was Ithra, an Israelite]* By Religion; though by Birth an *Ismaelite*. See *1 Chron.* ii. 27. *Abarbinel* thinks the quite contrary, that he was an *Israelite* by Birth, but had lived long in the Land of the *Ismaelites*. And by the Son of a Man he understands an illustrious Person.

That went in to *Abigail* the Daughter of *Nabash*,] That is, he married one of the Daughters of *Jesse*; who is here called *Nabash*. For, as *Kimchi* observes, many Persons had two Names: And this signifies a Serpent. From whence it is, that when *Isaiab* saith, xiv. 29. out of the Serpents root (or the root of *Nabash*) shall come forth a Cockatrice, or Basilisk; the *Chaldee* Paraphrase expounds it, out of the root of *Jesse* shall come forth the *Messiah*. Who was typified by the brazen Serpent in the Wilderness.

Sister to *Zeruiah*, *Joab's* Mother.] So *Amasa* was Cousin-German to *Joab*: and *David* was Uncle to them both. *Absalom*, one would think, should not have trusted in such an Office, so near a Relation of *David*: But he himself was much nearer; and he took *Amasa* to be as ambitious as himself.

Ver. 26. *So Israel and Absalom pitched in the land of Gilead.]* Waiting an Opportunity to fight *David*.

Ver. 27. *And it came to pass when David was come to Mahanaim, that Shobi the Son of Nabash of Rabbath of the Children of Ammon,]* This was a Comfort to *David* to see himself honoured in his Distress, by one of a strange Country; which he had made his Enemy, by the terrible Execution he had made among them, xii. 26, &c. But it is thought, that this *Shobi* the Brother of *Hanun*, abhorring the base Affront which he put upon *David*, was preserved by him; and made King of the Country in the room of *Hanun*. And shewed his Gratitude for so great

a Kindness, by coming to his Relief, and perhaps to his Assistance in his extreme Necessity.

And *Machir* the Son of *Amiel* of *Lodebar*,] Who bred up *Mephibosheth* the Son of *Jonathan*, 'till *David* sent for him, ix. 5.

And *Barzillai* the Gileadite of *Rogelim*,] Who was a Man of great Wealth (xix. 32.) and of as great Goodness: For he maintained *David* while he was in those Parts.

Ver. 28. *Brought Beds, and Basins, and earthen Vessels,]* All manner of Household-stuff, which they now wanted.

And *Wheat*, and *Barley*, and *Flour*, and parched Corn, and *Beans*, and *Lentiles*, and parched Pulse,] All sorts of Provision, which were necessary for the Sustenance either of Man or Beast. And they brought it of their own Accord, without asking, which was a Token of their affectionate Loyalty. The Word *Kali* is twice repeated among these Provisions, and is first joined with *Wheat*, *Barley*, and *Flour*. And properly signifies *toftas fruges*, parched Corn, as we well translate it. And in the latter end of the Verse, after *Beans* and *Lentiles*, it must signify, as *Bochart* observes *toftum aut frictum aliquod legumen*, viz. *frictum cicer*, some parched or fried sort of Pulse, to wit, fried Vetches: Which grew plentifully in *Judæa*; as it was common among both *Greeks* and *Romans* in their Food, as *Bochart* shews in his *Hierozyicon*, P. 2. Lib. 1. Cap. 7. where he observes that it is called *Kali* by the *Arabians* to this day. And here we may learn, by the way, from this Story, and the Present made him by *Abigail*, and by *Ziba*, what was the ordinary Victuals used in those Days. Grain and Pulse made up a great Part of it, which were the common Food of the ancient *Egyptians*. And the *Romans*, in their best Times, when they most of all applied themselves to Agriculture, did scarcely live upon any thing else: Whence came the illustrious Names of *Fabius*, *Piso*, *Cicero*, and *Lentulus*.

Ver. 29. *And Honey,]* Milk and Honey in those Times were reckon'd the greatest Delicacies, and were the Food of Kings and great Persons; as the same *Bochart* observes, Lib. 4. Cap. 11.

And *Butter*, and *Sheep*, and *Cheese* of Kine for *David* and for the People that were with him to eat:] The making of *Butter*, I have observed elsewhere, was early known in those Countries; and so was *Cheese*. For, as the Author now mentioned, observes, though these Words *Saphoth* *Lachar* be very variously interpreted, yet the *Chaldee* and *Syriac*, as well as all the *Hebrews*, understand by *Saphoth* *Cheese* made of Cow's Milk: From the *Hebrew* and *Chaldee* Word *Saphar*, which signifies to strain; *Cheese* being made by pressing the Whey out of the Curds. See *Hierozyicon*, P. 1. Lib. 2. Cap. 33. Here is no mention of any Flesh-Meat but *Sheep*, which were very plentiful in those Countries: And so was *Fish* also, but we never read any mention of its being eaten, 'till the latter Times. For it is supposed by Learned Men, that the Ancients despised it, as too light and delicate for strong Stomachs. Whence they observe that *Homer* never speaks of it, nor any *Grecian* Writer of the Heroick Times.



*For they said, the People are weary, and hungry, and thirsty in the Wilderneys.]* Where there was Scarcity of Provision, and therefore they needed Refreshment, when they were come out of it. Which moved these good People to bring them Beds to rest themselves in, after their Journey; and all these good things which this rich Country afforded to satisfy their Hunger: And it is highly probable, Bottles of Wine were not wanting, to make their Entertainment more noble.

## C H A P. XVIII.

Verse 1. **A**ND David numbred the People that were with him,] And found them sufficient to make a considerable Army.

*And set Captains of thousands and Captains of hundreds over them.]* Formed them into Regiments and Companies (as we now speak) and set proper Officers and Commanders over them.

Ver. 2. *And David sent forth a third part of the People under the hand of Joab,]* Who was the General of the whole Host: But now David intended to command in chief himself (as we read in the End of this Verse) and therefore committed only a third part of the Army to the Conduct of Joab.

*And a third part under the hand of Abishai the Son of Zeruiah, Joab's Brother, and a third part under the hand of Ittai the Gittite :]* Order and Discipline is of more Force in a Battel than great Numbers: Therefore David disposes his little Army, for so it was in Comparison (*Josephus* saith but four thousand Men) into three Bodies, under three eminent Commanders: Who were to succour one another as they saw Occasion.

*And the King said unto the People, I will surely go forth with you my self also.]* Which he thought would be a great Encouragement to them, and make them fight the more valiantly.

Ver. 3. *But the People answered, Thou shalt not go forth: for if we flee they will not care for us; neither if half of us die, will they care for us:]* They did not think it adviseable that he should hazard himself: For which they give a good Reason, That if they should be routed, and half of them slain, *Absalom* would not think himself a Conqueror as long as *David* was alive: Who might raise new Forces, and give him Battel again. And, as *Josephus* adds, they might possibly think the King had another Army to guard his Person.

*But now thou art worth ten thousand of us:]* Whose Person therefore ought not to be exposed to Danger.

*Therefore now it is better that thou succour us out of the City.]* By sending them, if there were need, a fresh Supply of Men, which he kept with him as a Reserve in the City: And Provision also, with Counsel and Advice, as Occasion required.

Ver. 4. *And the King said unto them, What seemeth you best, I will do:]* He submitted to their Opinion; for it was not a Time now to oppose the Sense of his People.

*And the King stood by the Gate-side, and all the People came out by hundreds, and by thousands.]*

Whom *Josephus* saith, he exhorted to be faithful and courageous, remembering what he had done for them, *ὡς καὶ αὐτοῖς ἐπέσχετο*, praying God to make them victorious.

Ver. 5. *And the King commanded Joab, and Abishai, and Ittai, saying, Deal gently for my sake (with the young Man, even with Absalom.)* If they got the better, he prayed, or rather required them, to spare *Absalom's* Life: Though he did not deserve it, yet because *David* desired it, whose Affection was wonderfully great to him, as his Son; and in hope perhaps to reclaim him and bring him to Repentance. He considered him also as a rash young Man, and therefore an Object of his and their Pity.

*And all the People heard, when the King gave all (the Captains charge concerning Absalom.)* So that no private Soldier might voluntarily kill him.

Ver. 6. *And the People went out into the Field against Israel: and the Battle was in the Wood of Ephraim;]* *Josephus* saith, that *Joab* drew up his Men, *ἐν τῷ πεδίῳ μεγάλῳ* in a large Field, which had a Wood behind it. Which is called the Wood of *Ephraim*, not because it belonged to the Tribe of *Ephraim*; for they had no Possessions on this side *Jordan*, where the Battle was fought: But the *Gileadites* gave it that Name in Memory of the great Slaughter *Jephthah* made of the *Ephraimites* hereabouts, mentioned *Judges* xii.

Ver. 7. *Where the Men of Israel were slain before the Servants of David.]* They who fought for *Absalom*, being called the Men of *Israel*, it looks like an Argument that *David's* Army was principally gathered out of his own Tribe of *Judah*. But it will appear from *xix. 11.* that this is not true: And therefore by *Israel* we are to understand the Tribes on the other side *Jordan*, who pursued *David* into the Land of *Gilead*: Where he had got together a small Army.

*And there was a great Slaughter that day of twenty thousand men.]* For the Fight was obstinate, as *Josephus* thinks; both Sides having great Reason to stand stoutly to it. *Lib. 7. Antiq. Cap. 9.*

Ver. 8. *For the Battel was there scattered over the face of all the Country:]* Thereabout; both in the Field and in the Wood.

*And the Wood devoured more People than the Sword devoured.]* Some think the Wood is said to devour them, because they fell into Pits, or stumbled upon Stumps of Trees, or pressed one another to Death, as they came into strait Places; or were killed by wild Beasts. But the most simple Meaning is, that there were more slain in the Wood than in the Field. That is, more in the Flight, than in the Fight: So *Josephus*, *ὡς φεύγοντας πεσεῖν πλείονας ἢ μαχομένους*. For they could not run away so fast in the Wood, as in the open Field. Many also being weary, it is likely got into lurking Places, and were there killed by wild Beasts.

Ver. 9. *And Absalom met the Servants of David;]* In his Flight through the Wood, he chanc'd to meet some of *David's* Soldiers; who would not kill him, nor so much as stop him, much less seize him: For so it seems they understood *David's* Commandment, that they should not meddle with him. But though they let



let him go, yet God met with him, and put a stop to his Flight, as it here follows.

*And Absalom rode upon a Mule,]* Full speed, as fast as it could carry him.

*And the Mule went under the thick Boughs of a great Oak, and his Head caught hold of the Oak,]* His Neck, I suppose, stuck fast between the Boughs of this Oak.

*And he was taken up between the Heaven and the Earth, and the Mule that was under him went away.]* He hung there, having nothing to support him: And his Neck was so wedged between the Boughs, by the swift Motion of the Mule, that he was not able to disengage himself. I do not see any Colour for their Opinion, who think he hung by his Hair, which being very long, was wrapt about the Boughs of the Tree: Nor is it probable he was without a Helmet, which covered his Hair. And besides, it is said afterward, that *Joab* smote him while he was yet alive, in the Middle of the Oak, ver. 14. Which had been no Wonder, if he had only hung by his Hair; which would not have killed him: Whereas when *Joab* came to him, he was only not quite dead, but very near it. Yet that great Man *Bochartus*, in his Epistle about the Weight of *Absalom's* Hair, supposes it to have been so thick, and so strong, that the Weight of his whole Body could not break it when he hung thereby. Though in his last Work he saith, *Hæsit inter ramos arborum, & jumento prætergresso pependit inter cælum & terram.* He stuck between the Boughs of Trees, and his Beast going from under him, he hung between Heaven and Earth. *Hierozoicon, P. 1. Lib. 2. Cap. 11.*

Ver. 10. *And a certain Man saw it, and told Joab, and said, Behold, I saw Absalom hanged in an Oak.]* But not dead.

Ver. 11. *And Joab answered to the Man that told him, And behold, thou sawest him, and why didst thou not smite him there to the ground, and I would have given thee ten Shekels of Silver, and a Girdle?]* A Military Belt, which was much esteemed, 1 Sam. xviii. 4.

Ver. 12. *And the Man said, Though I should receive a thousand Shekels of Silver in my Hand,]* In ready Money (as we speak) paid down before-hand.

*Yet would I not put forth my Hand against the King's Son: for in our hearing the King charged thee, and Abishai, and Ittai,]* It was a Thing notoriously known, not only to him, but to all the Army.

*Saying, Beware that none touch the young Man Absalom,]* Do him no Hurt; but leave me to punish him.

Ver. 13. *Otherwise, I should have wrought falsehood against my own Life:]* Not only been false and disobedient to the King, but brought his own Life in danger; and therefore not have been true to himself.

*For there is no matter bid from the King, and thou thy self wouldst have set thy self against me.]* He knew the Genius of *Joab* so well, that he was sure he would have been as forward as any, both to inform the King of what he had done, and to have him punished for disobeying his Sovereign. *Joab* also knew this to be so true, that he doth not rebuke him for this bold Saying.

VOL. II.

Ver. 14. *Then said Joab, I may not tarry thus with thee.]* Lose Time in such Discourse.

*And he took three Darts into his Hand,]* From the Hebrew *Sbatim*, which we translate *Darts*, comes the Latin Word *Spatha*: Which was a sort of Weapon among the ancient *Gauls*, as *Bochartus* shews, called by the *Chaldees* *Gisæ*; from whence the Latin *Gesum*: Which *Festus* saith, was grave *jaculum*, an heavy Dart, being made all of Iron. See his *Canaan, Lib. 1. Cap. 42.*

*And thrust them through the Heart of Absalom, while he was yet alive in the midst of the Oak.]* Not through that Part which is strictly called the Heart (for then he would have died immediately, and there would have been no need of his Soldiers falling upon him, as we read they did in the next Verse) but through the midst of his Body; which did not kill him out-right, but there was still some Life remaining in him.

Ver. 15. *And ten young Men that bear Joab's Armour,]* Who waited upon his Person, as General of the Army.

*Compassed about, and smote Absalom, and slew him.]* Surrounded him, and thrust their Spears or Swords through him; and so put an end to his Life. *Joab*, I suppose, thought himself not safe, as long as *Absalom* was alive. For some unquiet People, he thought, who were deeply engaged in this Rebellion, would move new Disturbances to set him on the Throne. Therefore he did not as *David* commanded, but as he imagined he should have commanded. *Kimchi* hath a Conceit that some of *Absalom's* Crimes are legible in his Punishment: For he wasthrust through with three Darts, having stolen the Heart of the King, and then of the two hundred Men that followed him out of *Jerusalem*; and then of all *Israel*. And as he committed Incest with his Father's ten Concubines, so ten young Men compassed him about, and killed him.

Ver. 16. *And Joab blew the Trumpet,]* Sounded a Retreat.

*And the People returned from pursuing after Israel: for Joab held back the People.]* This was done like a good Man: For he knew the People were drawn into this Rebellion, and would return to their Duty, now they had none to head them. Thus *Cæsar* after the Defeat of *Pompey*, and the scattering of his Army, cried *Miles parce civibus*, Soldiers, spare your Fellow-Citizens.

Ver. 17. *And they took Absalom, and cast him into a great pit in the Wood,]* They would not bring his Body to be disposed of by his Father's Order, lest it should too much move his Passion.

*And laid a great heap of Stones upon him:]* So that after a sort, he was stoned: As the Law ordered a rebellious Son to be, *Deut. xxi. 20, 21.* *Adricomius*, in his Description of the Holy Land, saith this Heap remained to his days; and all Travellers, as they went by it, were wont to throw a Stone to add to the Heap, in detestation of his Rebellion against his Father.

*And all Israel fled every one to his Tent.]* See 1 Sam. iv. 10.

Ver. 18. *And Absalom in his Life-time had taken and reared up for himself a Pillar, which is in the King's Dale:]* This Dale is mentioned, *Gen. xiv. 17.* and was not far from *Jerusalem*: There he thought to perpetuate his Memory

X x 2

(which



(which had better been forgotten) by a very magnificent Structure; as *Rasi*, and several other *Jewish* Doctors fancy: And some that have been in the Holy Land, tell us of such a Noble Fabrick in the Valley of *Jebosaphat*. But this is a supposititious Monument, as *Wagenseil* observes upon *Sota*, Page 221. For *Josephus*, who is more to be believed than these later Authors, saith, that it was only a Pillar, *Lib. 7. Antiq. Cap. 9.* where he calls it, *σύλῳ λίθου μαρμαρίτου*, a Pillar of Marble; which he saith, was two Furlongs from *Jerusalem*: In a Place where the King's Horses run Races, as some say, and other Exercises used to be performed.

For he said, *I have no Son to keep my name in remembrance:*] We read before, *xiv. 27.* that he had three Sons and one Daughter: But, as *Kimchi* and other *Hebrew* Doctors say, they were all dead; so that he had no Hope to make his Name survive him, by any other Means but this.

And he called the Pillar after his own Name, and it is called unto this day, *Absalom's Place.*] In the *Hebrew* the Word which we translate Place is *Jad*, which signifies an Hand. As much as to say, his Work: Though *Kimchi* observes, that this Word sometimes is the same with *Makom*, a Place, as in *Isaiab lvi. 5.* And when this Book was written, it bare *Absalom's* Name: Though it is likely it did not last very long; for such Works of Vanity are commonly short-liv'd. Of which the most famous Instance we meet with in History is recorded by *Pliny, Lib. 37. Natural. Hist. Cap. 6.* where he saith, *Demetrius Phalerus* had as many Statues erected to him in *Athens* as there are Days in the Year, viz. 360, which is more, he thinks, than ever Man had. But they were all thrown down, and broken in pieces, *nondum anno hunc numerum dierum excedente*, before a Year was expired.

Ver. 19. Then said *Abimaaz* the Son of *Zadok*, Let me now run and bear the King tidings, how the *L O R D* hath avenged him of his Enemies.] By this it appears *Abimaaz* did not return to *Jerusalem* after he carried Intelligence to *David*, but staid with him, and was in this Battel; for the Priests bore Arms as well as other Men: And particularly performed the Office of Trumpeters to the Army, *2 Chron. xiii. 12.* And here it is observable what strict Discipline was kept in those Days: That no Man durst stir to carry the News of what had been done, without the Leave of the Commander in chief.

Ver. 20. And *Joab* said unto him, Thou shalt not bear tidings this day, but thou shalt bear tidings another day:] Some Reward, no doubt, was wont to be given to him that brought good Tidings, especially of a great Victory: Which made him so desirous to be the Messenger.

But this day thou shalt bear no tidings, because the King's Son is dead.] Which he knew would be unwelcome News to *David*, and procure no Good to *Abimaaz*.

Ver. 21. Then said *Joab* to *Cushi*,] An *Ethiopian* by Birth, as some think, but had embraced the *Jewish* Religion: And it is probable, was one of those ten young Men who attended on *Joab*, and was present when *Absalom* was killed; and helped perhaps to dispatch him, *ver. 13.*

Go tell the King what thou hast seen.] He mentioned, it is likely, the Particulars: Which he would not put in Writing, but have him deliver by Word of Mouth. For he himself would not relate what he had done to *Absalom*.

And *Cushi* bowed himself unto him, and ran.] It was a great Honour to be a Messenger of such good Tidings, as the Defeat of the King's Enemies.

Ver. 22. Then said *Abimaaz* the Son of *Zadok*, yet again to *Joab*, But howsoever, let me, I pray thee, also run after *Cushi.*] We cannot tell what made him so earnest to carry Tidings, unless it was hope of Reward, and Confidence that his own Swiftnefs would make him the first Messenger of good News. For *Josephus* saith, he told *Joab* he would relate nothing to the King, but *περί μόνης τῆς νικῆς*, only concerning the Victory: *ἡσυχάζειν δὲ περί τῆς Ἀβσαλώμου τελευτῆς*, but say not a Word about the Death of *Absalom*.

And *Joab* said, Wherefore wilt thou run, my Son, seeing thou hast no tidings ready?] Concerning the Particulars of the Fight, which he had not Time to acquaint him withal. He calling him my Son, it signifies he had a great Affection to him, and therefore had denied his first Request: For *Joab* knew the King better than *Abimaaz* did; who had a mind to run, because he imagined the King would be pleased to hear he was out of danger: Whereas *Joab* knew the King loved *Absalom* so dearly, that no body would be acceptable to him that could not assure him he was safe.

Ver. 23. But however, said he, let me run.] He did not understand *Joab's* Kindness, and therefore presses him again to grant his Desire.

And he said unto him, Run. Then *Abimaaz* ran by the way of the Plain, and over-ran *Cushi.*] There were two Ways from hence to the Place where *David* was: One over the Mountains, which was the shorter Way; the other by the Plain, which though the longer, according to the Proverb, proved the nearest. Or, as *Josephus* understands it, *Abimaaz* ran a more compendious Way, which he alone knew, *ἐπιτομέ- τέραν ἐμβαλῶν τῶν ὁδῶν; γὰρ μόνος αὐτὴν ἐπιγίνωσκεν.*

Ver. 24. And *David* sat between the two Gates:] The Gate was a very large Place, where publick Meetings used to be; and had an inward and an outward Door, between which *David* sat to hear News.

And the Watchman went up to the roof over the Gate unto the Wall,] Over the Gate there was a Watch-Tower, from whence they might see round about, whether any were coming, and from what Quarter.

And lifted up his Eyes, and looked, and behold a Man running alone.] Whom he spied at some distance; but could not discern who he was.

Ver. 25. And the Watchman cried, and told the King. And the King said, If he be alone, there is tidings in his Mouth.] He took it for a Sign that he was a Messenger sent from *Joab*, and that he brought good News: For if they had been routed, there would have been more than one seen running away.

And he came apace, and drew near.] So that, in a little time, he could discern who he was.

Ver.



Ver. 26. *And the Watchman saw another Man running, and the Watchman called unto the Porter, and said, Behold, another Man running alone. And the King said, He also brings tidings.]* More News than the former.

Ver. 27. *And the Watchman said, Methinks the running of the foremost is like the running of Abimaaz the Son of Zadok.]* Who was remarkable, it seems, for his speed in Running.

*And the King said, He is a good Man, and comes with good Tidings.* He was one true to the King's Interest, and therefore he concluded, would not bring bad News.

Ver. 28. *And Abimaaz called, and said unto the King, All is well.]* He was in haste to let the King know the good Success they had in the Battel, and therefore seems to have said at a Distance, before he came up to him, *Peace*; which is the Word in the Hebrew, signifying all Happiness and Prosperity.

*And he fell down to the Earth upon his Face before the King,]* When he approached nearer to him.

*And said, Blessed be the LORD thy God, which hath delivered up the Men that lift up their hand against my Lord the King.]* Like a truly religious Man, he ascribes the Victory they had got unto the LORD; who still shewed his Mercy unto David, and continued to be his God, i. e. his Benefactor.

Ver. 29. *And the King said, Is the young Man Absalom safe?] He would not express his Joy 'till he heard that Absalom was preserved.*

*And Abimaaz answered, When Joab sent the King's servant, and me thy servant,]* This seems to signify that Cushy was one belonging to the Court.

*I saw a great tumult, but I knew not what it was.]* He dissimbled his Knowledge of Absalom's Death; and perhaps in this said true, that he did not know the particular Manner of it; though it appears plainly (from ver. 20.) that he knew he was dead.

Ver. 30. *And the King said unto him, Turn aside and stand here: and he turned aside, and stood still.]* He would not have him go away 'till, Cushy came, supposing he might find more of the Truth, by examining them both together.

Ver. 31. *And behold Cushy came,]* Not long after Abimaaz had delivered his Message.

*And Cushy said, Tidings, my Lord the King: for the LORD hath avenged thee this Day of all them that rose up against thee.]* He said no more than Abimaaz had done; thinking it would be unacceptable News to mention Absalom's Death.

Ver. 32. *And the King said unto Cushy, Is the young Man Absalom safe? And Cushy answered, The Enemies of my Lord the King, and all that rise against thee to do thee hurt, be as that young Man is.]* This was a decent manner of Speech to inform him that he was dead.

Ver. 33. *And the King was much moved,]* So that we do not find he enquired after the Manner of his Death, nor after any of the Particulars of the Victory.

*And went up to the Chamber over the Gate,]* See xix. 8.

*And wept:]* Being extremely disturbed, he retired as far as he could from all Company, ἐπὶ τὸ ὑπολόγατον τῆς πόλεως (as Josephus speaks)

to the very highest Part of the City, where he bewailed his Son, knocking his Breast, and tearing his Hair (as the same Author's Words are) καὶ παύσας αὐτὸν αἰνίζόμενος, afflicting himself all manner of Ways.

*And, as he went up, he said,]* When he came into the Chamber, it was not so easy to know what he did, or hear what he said, because he shut up himself privately: But as he went up the Stairs, he thus bemoaned the Loss of his Son.

*O my son Absalom, my son, my son Absalom! would God I had died for thee, O Absalom, my son, my son!]* No Words can be more passionate: And it is likely his Wish, that he had died in Absalom's stead, was only the Effect of excessive Love to him, and Grief for him, which made him vent himself in Expressions which were not considerate. But Pellicanus (in which he follows St. Austin) thinks this was a deliberate Wish, because Absalom died impenitent, and might have lived to be a better Man; but if David had died, he had good Hope of his own Salvation. But I take this not to be well grounded; for if David had died, in all likelihood his Son would not have been sorry for it, but triumphed in his good Success, and proved a wicked Tyrant over a base People. The Stupidity of the Jewish Doctors is inconceivable, who fancy Absalom would have cut his Hair, by which he hung, with his Sword, had he not seen Hell gaping for him, if he fell down; which made him choose to die in the Oak: But his Father, by his Lamentation over him, crying seven Times, *my Son, my Son*, delivered him from the seven Gates of Hell, and brought him into Paradise. See Bartoloccius in his Kirjath Sepher. Tom. 2. p. 128, &c. 162.

## C H A P. XIX.

Verse 1. *AND it was told Joab, Behold, the King weepeth and mourneth for Absalom.]* For Joab was now come to the City himself, to give the King an Account of the Fight: And it is likely Abimaaz, or Cushy, informed him how heavily the King took the News of his Son's Death.

Ver. 2. *And the Victory]* That is, the Joy for the Victory.

*That day was turned into mourning unto all the People: for the People heard say that day, how the King grieved for his Son.]* They had so great a Regard to their Prince, that when they heard of his Affliction, they were afflicted with him: And instead of triumphing, they also made Lamentations.

Ver. 3. *And the People gat them by stealth that day into the City,]* Not by the Gate where David was, but by some secret Way, that he might not see them: Just like Thieves, who are afraid to be discovered and punished for what they have done.

*As People being ashamed steal away when they flee in Battel.]* As if they had lost the Day, and not been victorious.

Ver. 4. *And the King covered his Face,]* Such was the Custom of deep Mourners (as Kimchi here observes) that they might neither see, nor



be seen. As being ashamed (saith R. Levi) any should behold their rueful Looks.

And the King cried with a loud Voice, O my Son Absalom, O Absalom my Son, my Son!] It is observed by many learned Men, that the Oriental People expressed their Passions with greater Vehemence than we are wont to do in these Parts of the World. Where crying out aloud with a doleful Voice, called *howling* in Scripture, is not usual; but was common among the Jews, as we see before in David, iii. 32. and at the laying the Foundation of the Temple after the Captivity, when they that wept with a loud Voice, drowned the Voice of those that shouted for Joy, Ezra iii. 12, 13.

Ver. 5. And Joab went into the House of the King,] It seems by this, that David was removed before Joab came; from the Top of the Gate, and gone to his House, where he was wont to reside.

And said, Thou hast shamed this day the Faces of all thy Servants,] Making them hang down their Heads, as if they had committed such a Crime, that they were ashamed to look Men in the Face.

Which this Day have saved thy Life, and the Lives of thy Sons, and of thy Daughters, and the Lives of thy Wives, and the Lives of thy Concubines:] Of all that was dear unto him.

Ver. 6. In that thou lovest thine Enemies, and hatest thy Friends;] In whose Preservation he seemed to take no pleasure, but only to grieve for the Loss of a Rebellious Son.

For thou hast declared this day, that thou regardest neither Princes, nor Servants:] Neither himself, nor Abishai, nor Ittai, nor any of the great Officers and faithful Soldiers, who had adventured their Lives for him.

For this day I perceive, that if Absalom had lived, and all we had died this day, then it had pleased thee well.] This was spoken by Joab too sharply, and insolently: Yet it was something necessary at this Time to awaken David out of a strange Lethargy, which made him take notice of no body, but behave himself as if he had no Concern for any Person in the World, but for Absalom alone, who was gone out of it.

Ver. 7. Now therefore arise, go forth, and speak comfortably to thy Servants:] He wishes him to go and shew himself to his People, and acknowledge their good Service, praise their Courage, and congratulate their happy Success: Giving the Honours and Largeſſes that were due unto them, or promising them Rewards proportionable to their Merits.

For I swear by the LORD, if I thou go not forth,] Unto the People, and declare how sensible he was of their Services.

There will not tarry with thee one Man this Night;] He resolved, and confirmed it with the most solemn Oath, that he would lead his whole Army away from him, and leave him alone. David seems to have answered nothing to all this Discourse, which moved Joab to conclude with these harsh Words.

And that will be worse unto thee than all the Evil that befel thee from thy Youth until now.] For during the cruel Persecution of Saul, as well as in this Exile, he had a good Company of faithful Persons with him. Josephus expresses this

Threatning very well, τότε σοι πικρότερον, καὶ ἀληθές ποιήσω τὸ πένθος; I will make thee weep for something (as we speak) and more bitterly than ever.

Ver. 8. Then the King arose, and sat in the Gate:] Where the Concourse of People used to be about Business. For the Gate was a spacious Place, and the same Thing with the Exchange, or the Forum among the Romans. The Market for Commodities was held here, as we learn from the Prophecy of Elisha, who foretold Corn should be sold at such a Rate the next Day in the Gate of Samaria, 2 Kings vii. 2. which was a very large Place, since Ahab assembled there four hundred false Prophets, 1 Kings xxii. 10. In these Gates also there was some Building, wherein were Seats for the Elders and Judges: For Boaz having a Cause to be heard, went up to the Gate, and sat down there, Ruth iv. 1, 2. And so many publick Assemblies being held here, it makes it probable that the Chamber over the Gate (mentioned in the foregoing Chapter) where David went to weep, was the Place where the Privy Council were wont to meet.

And they told unto all the People,] That were in the City and elsewhere.

Saying, Behold the King doth sit in the Gate: and all the People came before the King:] To congratulate to him his Safety, and to receive the Tokens of his Favour.

For all Israel had fled every Man to his Tent.] 'Till the People heard the King appeared publickly, and no longer bewailed Absalom.

Ver. 9. And all the People were at strife through all the Tribes of Israel,] Who should be forwardest to bring back the King: Blaming one another's Slackness in it.

Saying, the King saved us out of the Hand of our Enemies, and he delivered us out of the Hand of the Philistines, and now he is fled out of the Land for Absalom.] They call to mind what Benefits they had received by his Means, in their Deliverance from many Enemies; especially the Philistines, who had grievously oppressed them: And also their great Ingratitude to him in driving him out of Jerusalem, and forcing him to flee over Jordan, for the sake of Absalom.

Ver. 10. And Absalom whom we anointed over us, is dead in Battle:] We do not read of his being actually anointed: But they chose him for their King, and obeyed him as if he had.

Now therefore why speak ye not a Word of bringing the King back?] They spake this to their Elders; who seem to have been dubious what to do, 'till they heard the Sense of the People.

Ver. 11. And David sent to Zadok, and to Abiathar the Priests,] By their Sons, whom he had with him.

Saying, Speak unto the Elders of Judah,] The Priests were Men of great Authority, especially the High-priest and his Deputy; and most proper to be employed to deal with the Elders.

Saying, Why are ye the last to bring the King back to his House?] That which made them so cold, was, I suppose, the Sense of their Guilt in joining with Absalom: Who began his Conspiracy in Jerusalem it self, and perfected it in Hebron, both Cities of Judah. Whose Revolt was the baser, because he was of their Tribe, and



and had long shewn his great Kindness to them (1 Sam. xxx. 26, &c.) the Conscience of which made them afraid to bring him again to *Jerusalem*.

(*Seeing the speech of all Israel is come to the King, even to his house*) These last Words, *even to his house*, seem to be but a Repetition of what was said before, *to his House*, viz. at *Jerusalem*: The other Words being a *Parentthesis*.

Ver. 12. *Ye are my Brethren, ye are my Bone, and my Flesh*:] That is, he had much Kindred among them.

*Why are ye then the last to bring the King back?*] He expresses the greater Kindness to them, lest they should be so desperate as to defend *Jerusalem* against him.

Ver. 13. *And say unto Amasa, Art not thou of my Bone and of my Flesh?*] That is, his Sister's Son: Whom he bids them particularly court; for, being General of *Abshalom's* Forces, he might through Shame and Fear be very loth to look his Uncle in the Face.

*God do so to me and more also, if thou be not Captain of the Host before me continually in the room of Joab.* He solemnly promises to prefer him to the highest Command of the Kingdom: For now he thought it a fit time to deprecate *Joab*; who was grown insufferably insolent and imperious. For he had slain *Abner* most perfidiously in cold Blood; and killed *Abshalom* against the King's Command; and now lately insulted him in his Sorrow: Threatning, (if we may believe *Josephus*) τὴν βασιλείαν ἐτέρῳ παραδύναι, that he would depose him, and deliver the Kingdom to some other Person. This Promise *David* endeavoured to perform, bidding *Amasa* take upon him to assemble all the Men of *Judah* (xx. 4.) yet leaving *Joab* (ver. 7.) the Command of his own Legion. Which he took so heinously, that he killed *Amasa*; and was Captain of the Host again, more out of Fear, than any Favour *David* had for him: For if *Amasa* had lived, *David* would have humbled him. For *Amasa* had a great Interest in *Israel*, over whom he had commanded in Chief; especially in the Tribe of *Judah*, whose Heart he bowed to receive *David* again, as it here follows.

Ver. 14. *And he bowed the Heart of all the Men of Judah, even as the Heart of one Man*,] Either this Disposition was wrought in them by *Amasa*; or the kind Words delivered from *David* by *Zadock* and *Abiathar*, overcame them.

*So that they sent this Word unto the King*,] By some messenger of their own.

*Return thou and all thy Servants*.] Assuring him they were ready to receive him, and return to their Obedience.

Ver. 15. *So the King returned and came to Jordan*:] Began to return back, and came as far as *Jordan*: Which parted the Country where he was from the Land of *Canaan*.

*And Judah*] That is, the Elders of *Judah*.

*Came to Gilgal, to go to meet the King, to conduct the King over Jordan*.] This was an Expression of their great Affection, to come thus far to attend him, and to furnish him, I suppose, with Accommodations in his Journey: For *Gilgal* was near *Jordan*; on the other side of the River.

Ver. 16. *And Shimei the Son of Gera, a Benjamite, which was of Bahurim, hasted and came*

*down with the Men of Judah, to meet King David*.] Hoping *David* would receive him kindly in such good Company.

Ver. 17. *And there were a thousand Men of Benjamin with him*,] He was nobly attended, to show how powerful he was, and what an Interest he had in his Country: And yet came to implore the King's Mercy. Perhaps he was a Captain of a Thousand in his own Tribe: Who came with him to intercede for his Pardon.

*And Ziba the Servant of the House of Saul, and his fifteen Sons and his twenty Servants with him*,] See ix. 10.

*And they went over Jordan before the King*.] They were so officious as to go further than the Men of *Judah*, to the other side of *Jordan*, where the King was: Before whom they passed over.

Ver. 18. *And there went over a Ferry-boat*.] Prepared, as many suppose, by the Men of *Judah*. *Josephus* will have it a Bridge; composed perhaps of many Boats joined together.

*To carry over the King's Household, and to do what he thought good*: To carry over what he pleased to order.

*And Shimei the Son of Gera fell down before the King, as he was come over Jordan*;] As soon as he landed.

Ver. 19. *And said unto the King, Let not my Lord the King impute Iniquity to thy Servant, neither do thou remember that which thy Servant did perversely in the Day that my Lord the King went out of Jerusalem, that the King should take it to his heart*.] Repent it so deeply as to be reveng'd of him.

Ver. 20. *For thy Servant doth know that I have sinned*:] He professes himself sensible of the Crime he had committed, and was sorry for it.

*Therefore behold, I come the first this Day of all the House of Joseph, to go down to meet my Lord the King*.] To shew by his Example, what the rest should do: And, as the Hebrew Doctors gloss upon it, they would all see in him an Instance either of *David's* Clemency or Severity; and accordingly behave themselves. He was not properly of the House of *Joseph*, but of a Tribe near of kin to it: So that at this Time, it seems, they looked upon themselves as Members of the same Body; being descended from the same Mother: And they continued so 'till the Kingdom was rent. For *Benjamin* is placed between *Ephraim* and *Manasseh* (the two Sons of *Joseph*) in *Psalms* lxxx. 2. and they marched under the same Standard, *Numb.* ii. 18, 19, &c.

Ver. 21. *But Abishai the Son of Zeruiab answered and said, Shall not Shimei be put to death for this, because he cursed the Lord's Anointed?*] He would have gone and done Execution upon him, at that Time when he cursed (xvi. 9.) and now he imagined there could be no Reason to spare him.

Ver. 22. *And David said, What have I to do with you, ye Sons of Zeruiab*,] It seems *Joab* joined with his Brother: Who thought to govern all the King's Motions as they pleased. But he bids them, in a disdainful manner, stand aside, and not meddle in this Matter.

*That ye should this day be Adversaries unto me?*] Hinder me from following my own Inclinations, and set my People against me. For by following this Advice, he might have alienated the Hearts of



of all *Israel* from him, and made them fear the like Punishment for their Revolt.

5 Shall any Man be put to death this day in *Israel*?] In a time of universal Joy, he would not have any Family have Cause to make Lamentation. It was accounted an ill Omen among other Nations, if any Man was put to death on the King's Birth-day: And this was a second *Natalis Imperii*, Birth-day of *David's* Empire; which he would not have sullied with any Cloud of Sorrow.

For do I not know that I am this day King of *Israel*?] He had Power to punish, or to pardon, as he pleased: And being restored to his Kingdom, would not enter upon it with Blood.

Ver. 23. Therefore the King said unto *Shimei*, Thou shalt not die: and the King swore unto him.] That he would not put him to death. But this did not oblige him not to give such a Charge as he did to *Solomon*, to do Justice upon him for any new Disobedience. Nothing is more glorious than Mercy and Clemency, as the Heathens themselves were sensible. *Cæsar* saith in a Letter of his to *Oppius* and *Cornelius* (which is among *Cicero's* Epistles) *Hæc nova est vincendi ratio*, &c. This is a new way of conquering, to fence our selves by Mercy and Liberality, L. 9. *Epist. ad Atticum*.

Ver. 24. And *Mephibosheth* the son of *Saul*.] That is, his Grand-son.

Came down to meet the King, and had neither dressed his Feet,] But wholly neglected himself, as they used to do in a Time of publick Sorrow. For the not dressing his Feet signifies (as *Schickard* and others understand that he had not cut the Nails of his Toes; but let them grow, as he did his Beard. It may be understood of his not washing his Feet; the Neglect of which made Men very fordid. For in those Countries, they lying upon Beds when they eat (as *Scaliger* observes in his Sixth Book *de Emend. Temporum*) put off their Shoes, and washed their Feet, *ne pulverosis pedibus strata inquinarent*, lest they should defile the Carpets, with their dusty Feet. Besides, in hot Weather the Smell of their Feet without washing was offensive.

Nor trimmed his Beard,] He not only let the Hair grow, but took no care to put it in good Order. For the Words in the Hebrew are, he had not done any thing to his feet, nor any thing to his beard.

Nor washed his Clothes.] His Shirt, nor any of the Linnen which he wore. As for their woollen Garments, they were not wont to wash them.

From the day the King departed, until the day he came again in peace.] This long-continu'd Mourning argued him to be really afflicted for the King's Exile.

Ver. 25. And it came to pass, when he was come to *Jerusalem* to meet the King,] It is manifest from the foregoing Verse, that he came down from some other Place to *Jerusalem* to meet the King: But could not meet him sooner, as others had done, because *Ziba* had got his Estate, and, it is likely, would not furnish him with an Ass, no more than he had done when *David* fled away.

That the King said unto him, Wherefore wentest

thou not with me, *Mephibosheth*?] His Prudence, as well as Gratitude obliged him.

Ver. 26. And he answered, My Lord, O King, my Servant deceived me; for thy Servant said, I will saddle my Ass, and ride thereon; and go to the King; for thy Servant is lame.] He had ordered an Ass to be made ready for him to carry him to *David*: Instead of which, *Ziba* saddled it for himself; and went with that false Story, which is mentioned xvi. 3.

Ver. 27. And he hath slandered thy Servant unto my Lord the King; but my Lord the King is an Angel of God:] To discern between Truth and Falshood.

Do therefore what is good in thy sight.] And therefore he submits himself intirely to his Judgment, and trusted to his Kindness.

He had great Reason so to do, as he confesses in the next words.

Ver. 28. For all my Father's House were but dead Men before my Lord the King: yet didst thou set thy Servant among those that did eat at thy own Table:] The undeserved Benefits he had received from *David* made him absolutely resign himself to his Will and Pleasure.

What right therefore have I yet to cry any more to the King?] He did not challenge any thing as his Right, nor thought it decent to trouble the King further with his Complaints.

Ver. 29. And the King said unto him, Why speakest thou any more of thy matters?] As if he had said, Enough, Enough; I desire to hear no more of the Injuries done me by the House of *Saul*.

I have said, Thou and *Ziba* divide the Land.] Some of the Hebrew Doctors understand this, as if he now parted the Estate formerly given to *Mephibosheth*, between him and *Ziba*; partly out of Shame, lest he should appear too rash and hasty of Belief, in giving all to *Ziba*, and partly out of Suspicion that the too great Wealth of *Mephibosheth* might make him ambitious. But they acknowledge this Sentence to be unjust, *Ziba* making no Defence for himself. And some of them say, a Voice from Heaven was heard thereupon, saying, that God would make the like Division of *David's* Kingdom, between *Rehoboam* and *Jeroboam*. But if we carefully attend to the Words, they carry another Sense in them; being as much as if he had said, My first Grant shall stand; when he decreed that *Mephibosheth* should be Lord of the Land, and *Ziba* should manage it for him, ix. 10. See *Selden de Successionibus*, Cap. 25. Fol. 89, 90. where he makes out this very clearly.

Ver. 30. And *Mephibosheth* said unto the King, Yea, let him take all, forasmuch as my Lord the King is come again in peace unto his own house.] Nothing could be more generously spoken, nor signified greater Affection, than that he was content to be a Beggar, now that the King was restored to his Kingdom.

Ver. 31. And *Barzillai* the Gileadite came down from *Rogelim*,] A Place in Mount Gilead.

And went over Jordan with the King, to conduct him over Jordan.] Meerly to bring him on his Way so far, and then return.

Ver. 32. Now *Barzillai* was a very aged Man, even fourscore years old,] Which was a great Age in *David's* Days, *Psal.* xc. 10.



*And he had provided the King of Sustenance, while he lay at Mahanaim: for he was a very great Man.]* And had a very large Heart, which moved him to supply the Wants of David, and all his Family and Attendants, as long as he stayed at Mahanaim, which was a considerable time. *Pliny* relates, that *Crassus* denied any Man to be rich, who was not able to maintain a Legion, *Lib. 33. Natural. Histor. Cap. 10.* where he mentions one that entertained all *Xerxes's* Army at a Feast: But here was a far more rare Example of Virtue in *Barzillai*, who maintained not a prosperous Prince in all his Glory, but a distressed Prince in his Exile, when no hope appeared of a Reward.

Ver. 33. *And the King said unto Barzillai, Come over with me, and I will feed thee with me at Jerusalem.]* Entertain him at his own Table, as a singular Friend.

Ver. 34. *And Barzillai said unto the King, How long have I to live, that I should go up with the King unto Jerusalem?] He excuses himself, by several Reasons, for not accepting the King's Kindness; and the first is, because as he was unfit for travel so far, so for so short a time as he had to live, it was not prudent to change his Dwelling.*

Ver. 35. *I am this day fourscore Years old, and can I discern between Good and Evil?] These general Words are explained by the Particulars which follow.*

*Can thy Servant taste what I eat and drink? can I hear any more the Voice of singing Men, and singing Women?] His second Reason is, that the King's Kindness would be ill bestowed upon one that had no Relish left of any of the Pleasures of a Court.*

*Wherefore then should thy Servant be a burden unto my Lord the King?] A third is, that instead of doing the King any Service, he should prove a Burden to him; for old Men must have some to wait on them, and take care of them.*

Ver. 26. *Thy Servant will go a little way over Jordan with the King:] Express his dutiful Affection to him as far as he was able.*

*And why should the King recompense me with such a reward?] Since he had but done his duty to his Sovereign, he did not expect to be so highly rewarded for it.*

Ver. 37. *Let thy Servant, I pray thee, turn back again, that I may die in my own City, and be buried by the Grave of my Father and of my Mother:] He beseeches him for a fourth Reason, not to press him to go further; but suffer him to enjoy that which old Men naturally desire; to die in the Place where they have lived; and to be buried with their Ancestors.*

*But behold thy Servant Chimham, let him go over with my Lord the King, and do unto him what shall seem good unto thee.] That he might not seem rude in refusing the King's gracious Offer, he desires him to translate his Kindness to his Son, and bestow upon him what he pleased.*

Ver. 38. *And the King answered, Chimham shall go over with me, and I will do unto him that which shall seem good unto thee:] He would not have it left to his Choice what he should do for Chimham; but desires the good old Man to say what he would have for him, and it should be done. We do not read what Barzillai asked, or what*

David did for him: But there being mention made in *Jer. xli. 17.* of the habitation of *Chimham*, and that near to *Bethlehem*, it is a very reasonable Conjecture of *Grotius*, in his Annotations on that Place, that David having a Patrimony in the Field of *Bethlehem*, the Place of his Nativity, *Ius ibi habitandi, & fructus quosdam suos faciendi dedit Chimhamo*, he bestowed it upon *Barzillai's* Son; and from thence this Place took the Name of *Chimham*, which remained 'till the Days of *Jeremiah*.

*And whatsoever thou shalt require of me, that will I do for thee.] He promises withal, that when Barzillai was gone home, if he had any Occasion to petition him, his Request should be granted.*

Ver. 39. *And all the People went over Jordan: and when the King was gone over, the King kissed Barzillai, and blessed him:] They parted with great Kindness, and the King prayed God to requite what Barzillai had done for him*

*And he returned to his place,] With great Satisfaction, that he had seen his Sovereign in his way to be restored to his Kingdom.*

Ver. 40. *And the King went on to Gilgal, and Chimham went with him:] As one of his near Attendants.*

*And all the People of Judah conducted the King; and also half the People of Israel.] That is, the Elders, and great Men both of Judah and Israel. To gratify his own Tribe, David marched on, not expecting the coming of all the great Men of Israel, who were making themselves ready to wait upon him.*

Ver. 41. *And behold, all the Men of Israel came to the King, and said unto the King,] When the other half of the Israelites were got together, they thus expostulated with the King.*

*Why have our Brethren, the Men of Judah, stolen thee away, and have brought the King, and his Household, and all David's Men with him, over Jordan?] That is, why did they make such haste, and not expect our Consent and Assistance, who were as zealous as themselves to bring the King back? They seem to take it ill, that not only David and his Family, but all his Men, i. e. his Soldiers and Guards, should be brought over Jordan; as if they would force their way, whether the Israelites would or no.*

Ver. 42. *And all the Men of Judah answered the Men of Israel, Because the King is near of kin to us:] Being of their Tribe, which justly required they should be more forward than others in his Service.*

*Wherefore then be ye angry with us?] For our Affection to him.*

*Have we eaten at all of the King's Cost, or hath he given us any Gift?] We get nothing by it, but have only done our Duty, and testified our great Affection. Abarbinel thinks these Words, given us any gift, import Expiation and Pardon; as in *Gen. xviii. 26. Numb. vi. 26.* And are as much as if they had said, hath he granted us a Pardon for what we did in the Business of *Absalom*? Whereby they suggested, that the Israelites were the principal Actors in that Rebellion, and needed an Act of Oblivion, though they did not.*



Ver. 43. *And the Men of Israel answered the Men of Judah, and said,]* The Words are not as before, *all the Men of Israel:* Which is a sign some of them were cooled, though most of them continued violent.

*We have ten Parts in the King,]* By the King is here meant the Kingdom: *Ten Parts* of which they say were theirs (whereas they were eleven Tribes besides Judah) because Simeon being intermixed with Judah, it is likely now came along with them.

*We have also more right in David than you:]* As David was a private Person, Judah had more Interest in him than the rest, because he was of their Tribe: But as he was a King, the Israelites had more, being the far greater part of his Subjects.

*Why then did ye despise us, that our Advice should not be first had in bringing back our King?]* They looked upon it therefore as a great Neglect, if not Contempt of them, that they had not the Precedence in this Business.

*And the Words of the Men of Judah were fiercer than the Words of the Men of Israel.]* More vehement: or, they were too hard for them in their Argument. David did not think fit to interpose; which made the Men of Israel think he favoured Judah, and thence arose a new Rebellion.

## CHAP. XX.

Verse 1. **A**ND there happen'd to be there] When this Contention fell out between the Men of Israel and Judah.

*A Man of Belial, whose Name was Sheba the son of Bichri, a Benjamite,]* Who perhaps was of kin to Saul, as Shimei was (xvi. 5.) and one of the Commanders in Absalom's Army next to Amasa. For so *Victorinus Strigelius* understands the Hebrew Words, *Isch Bichri*, to signify *unus ex Proceribus*, a Noble Man, of great Power and Authority among the People: like *Catiline* at Rome.

*And he blew a Trumpet, and said, we have no part in David, neither have we Inheritance in the Son of Jesse:]* As much as to say, let the Men of Judah have him to themselves. He cares not for us, and we care not for him.

*Every Man to his Tents, O Israel.]* He wishes all the Men of Israel, since David expressed no more Regard to them, to go to their Homes, and trouble themselves no further in bringing him back.

Ver. 2. *So every Man of Israel went up from after David, and followed Sheba the Son of Bichri:]* Instead of going home, they followed their seditious Incendiary: Taking it in snuff (as we speak) that the King did not expect 'till they, who were the Majority, came to conduct him: But relied solely on the Men of Judah, as if they were able, without the rest of Israel, to re-establish him in his Throne.

*But the Men of Judah clave unto their King from Jordan even to Jerusalem.]* Not a Man of them stirred from him, but conducted him from Jordan to Jerusalem. And we must not think that all the Men of Israel forsook him: But a very great Number of them. For *Shimei* in all like-

lihood, and his thousand Men, stuck to him, though of the same Tribe with *Sheba*; otherwise David would have punished him, when this Rebellion was quelled.

Ver. 3. *And David came to his House at Jerusalem, and the King took the Women his Concubines whom he had left to keep the House, and put them in ward,]* Shut them up close under a Guard, and fed them. Nobody came to them, but only to bring them daily Provision for their Sustainance.

*But went not in unto them:]* Never lay with them: But looked upon them as become impure to him; having been defiled by his Son.

*So they were shut up unto the Day of their Death, living in Widowhood.]* They were not fit for any body else, being Royal Wives: And therefore he did not give them a Bill of Divorce, but shut them up close, that no Man might enjoy them. And indeed it was not prudent to let them be so much as seen abroad: Which would have renewed the Remembrance of Absalom's Filthiness.

Ver. 4. *Then said the King unto Amasa, Assemble me the Men of Judah]* He makes good his Promise to Amasa: Which was a great Encouragement to others in the Tribe of Judah, to stick fast to their King. And by this means also the seditious Israelites might be the sooner brought to Reason; when they saw their old General in the Field against them.

*Within three Days,]* Because the Business required speedy Dispatch.

*And be thou here present.]* To receive his Orders.

Ver. 5. *So Amasa went to assemble the Men of Judah; but he tarried longer than the set Time which he had appointed him.]* He was not treacherous unto David (as the Jewish Doctors in the *Sanhedrim* say Joab represented him, and made it the Reason of his killing him) but he found difficulty in the Business: Because the People had an high Opinion of Joab, and would not easily be brought to serve under a new General. This Amasa, it is likely, was loth to report to the King, because it would diminish his Authority, and represent him as incapable to serve the King in the Office wherein he had placed him.

Ver. 6. *And David said to Abishai,]* He persisted in his Resolution to depress Joab; but employed his Brother, who was the next great Commander in the Army. Whom he doth not create Captain of the Host; but for fear this Delay should prove prejudicial, bids him take such Forces as he found ready in Jerusalem, and pursue Sheba.

*Now shall Sheba the Son of Bichri do us more harm than did Absalom:]* If he had Time to gather an Army: The People being highly incensed by the Provocation the Men of Judah had given them.

*Take thou therefore thy Lord's Servants,]* The Guards that attend David, and the standing Forces, which were always kept on foot.

*And pursue after him, lest he get him fenced Cities, and escape us.]* So that they must be put to the trouble of laying a long Siege to the Place where he was.



Ver. 7. *And there went out after him Joab's men,]* A Body of Men whom he particularly commanded.

*And the Cerethites and the Pelethites, and all the mighty Men :]* See upon viii. 18.

*And they went out of Jerusalem to pursue after Sheba the Son of Bichri.]* For David thought himself safe enough in the Love of the City of Jerusalem, and the rest of the People thereabouts.

Ver. 8. *And when they were at the great Stone which is in Gibeon,]* The Place of Rendezvous (as we now speak) appointed by Amasa for the Men of Judah. Which was, as Josephus saith, an hundred Furlongs from Jerusalem.

*Amasa went before them:]* As their Commander in chief.

*And Joab's Garment that he had put on,]* As soon as Amasa arrived at the Army, Joab also came there as a Volontier, of his own accord: Or rather, was there before with Abishai. Yea, Josephus takes it, as if David had spoken those Words (ver. 6.) unto Joab, telling him it was not safe to delay, and therefore bids him take such Forces as they had ready, and go with his Brother Abishai. Ἰωβὸς δὲ ἐκ ἑτὶ μέλλειν ἔκρινεν, ἀλλὰ τὸν τὲ ἀδελφὸν καὶ τὰς ἐξακοσίας παρέλαβε, &c. He resolv'd not to stay to gather more Forces: But with his Brother, and six hundred Men, and all the Force they had in Jerusalem, marched out to pursue Sheba.

*Was girded unto him, and upon it a Girdle, with a Sword fastened to his Loins, in the Sheath thereof.]* He had no Armour on, but such a Garment as Soldiers wore, closely girt to him: And upon it a Belt, in which a Sword hung by his Side. Yet Josephus saith he had a Breast-Plate, θώρακα ἐνδεδυμένον, as well as μάχαιραν περιζοσάμενον, begirt with a Sword.

*And as he went forth]* To meet Amasia, πολλὴν δύναμιν ἀναγόντα, who led numerous Forces to that Place, as the same Author speaks.

*It fell out.]* He had hung it so, that it might drop out of the Sheath when he pleased. And it fell out just as he went to salute and embrace Amasa: Who seeing him stoop to take it up, imagined it was only to put it into the Sheath again.

Ver. 9. *And Joab said unto Amasa, Art thou in health, my Brother ?]* He enquired in a friendly manner of his Welfare.

*And Joab took Amasa by the Beard with his right hand to kiss him.]* This is the Custom still among the Eastern People, the Indians: Who take one another by the Chin, or the Beard, when they would give an hearty Salute; and say Bobba, i. e. Father; or Bii, i. e. Brother, as the Author of the Voyage to the East-Indies relates, at the end of Peter de Valle his Travels, page 410.

Ver. 10. *And Amasa took no heed to the Sword that was in Joab's hand:]* Which he thought he had put into his Sheath; and did not observe that he held it in his Left Hand, which it seems he could manage as well as the Right.

*So he smote him therewith in the fifth rib,]* See iii. 17.

*And shed out his Bowels to the ground, and strook him not again, and he died:]* He gave him such a Wound, that his very Bowels gushed out;

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and there was no need to give him a second Stroke.

*And Joab, and Abishai his Brother, pursued after Sheba the Son of Bichri.]* Hereupon Joab immediately, without any Order, resumed his Command, and Abishai durst not oppose him, but yielded it up to him. For his Authority was so great among the Soldiery, that none of Amasa's Men durst stir to avenge his Death; the Cerethites and Pelethites, and all David's Guards submitting to him: And besides, all Amasa's Men were not yet come up, but followed by degrees, as appears by the rest of the Story.

Ver. 11. *And one of Joab's Men stood by him,]* By the Command of his Master; who knew this would make some Disorder among Amasa's Soldiers.

*And said, He that favoureth Joab, and he that is for David,]* He cunningly joins these two together, as if their Interest was inseparable.

*Let him follow after Joab.]* He was grown so insolent, because David durst not punish him; that as it made him venture upon this bloody Fact, so he presumed, that though the Sight of Amasa's dead Body might stop the March of those that came by it; yet upon the Declaration his Officer made, that now he was become General of the Army, their Love to him was such, that they would make no scruple to follow him.

Ver. 12. *And Amasa wallowed in Blood in the midst of the High-way:]* He seems not to have been quite dead, though senseless: But had so much Life, that he rolled to and fro in his own Blood, which was a doleful Sight.

*And when the Man saw that all the People stood still,]* Joab was deceived in his Measures, for the People hated this Fact, as much as they loved him. And therefore as many as saw it, would move no further till the Body was removed out of the way: so that they who were behind, went without any stop after Joab.

*He removed Amasa out of the High-way into the Field, and cast a Cloth upon him, when he saw that every one that came by him stood still.]* This was a prudent Officer; who expected no Orders, but of his own accord removed that out of sight, which hindered their Pursuit of Sheba.

Ver. 13. *And when he was removed out of the High-way, all the People went on after Joab, to pursue after Sheba the Son of Bichri.]* They that were behind, it is likely, did not know that Amasa was killed, and so marched on without any Scruple.

Ver. 14. *And he went through all the Tribes of Israel]* That is, Sheba rambled about the Country, from one City to another; to excite the People to take up Arms against David. But Josephus refers this to Joab, that he followed Sheba from place to place, till he came where he was

*Unto Abel, and Beth-Maachab,]* Or rather unto Abel Beth-Maachab: For they were one and the same Place, as appears by the next Verse. And so Josephus, who saith it was a strong City well fortified in the Tribe of Naphtali, in the northern Parts of Judea; upon the Borders of that Part of Syria, where Maachab was, x. 8. In this City Sheba at last settled himself, and resolved to defend



defend it: Being unable, I suppose, to raise such an Army, as to keep the Field.

*And all the Beerites:]* Among whom he had been before he came hither, and got some considerable Forces among them. For they were of the City *Beeroth* (it is probable) and the Parts adjacent: Which was in the Tribe of *Benjamin*, of which he was a Member, and perhaps dwelt in this City, *Joab*. xviii. 25.

*And they were gathered together, and went also after him.]* Unto *Abel Beth-Maachab*.

Ver. 15. *And they came]* That is, *Joab* and his Men pursued him thither.

*And besieged him in Abel of Beth-Maachab, and they cast up a Bank against the City,]* Raised Fortifications round about it, from whence to batter it.

*And it stood in the Trench:]* That is, *Joab's* Army had advanced so far, that they had filled up the Trench: And there stood at the very Foot of the Wall.

*And all the People that were with Joab battered the Wall, to throw it down.]* Some battered it with Engines from the Forts: While those at the Bottom of the Wall undermined it, to throw it down. So *Josephus*.

Ver. 16. *Then cried a wise Woman of the City,]* A Woman of great Understanding, who also could speak well. Many such there were in *Israel*, it appears by her of *Tekoah*, and *Abigail*; and the Mother of King *Lemuel*.

*Hear, hear; say I pray you unto Joab, come near hither, that I may speak with thee.]* She prays those that were at the Bottom of the Wall, to stop their Proceedings a while: And desires *Joab* to come and hear what Propositions she had to make to him.

Ver. 17. *And when he was come near unto her, the Woman said, Art thou Joab? and he answered, I am he.]* She was unwilling to treat with any one, but him who had Power to agree to what she propounded.

*Then she said unto him, Hear the Words of thine handmaid. And he answered, I do hear.]* He did not despise her because she was a Woman; but, as became a wise Man, gave her a favourable Audience, and attended to what she said.

Ver. 18. *Then she spake, saying, They were wont to speak in old time, saying, They shall surely ask counsel at Abel: and so they ended the matter.]* According to this Translation of the Words, she praises the City of *Abel* as famous, Time out of Mind, for Wisdom, and giving sound Advice: And now she would have him believe, was not without Persons of great Prudence, and Fidelity also (as it follows in the next Verse) who would not willingly offend their King. But there is another Translation in the Margin of our Bibles, which I take to be more literal; by referring the Word *Barishonab* not to old Time, but to the beginning of the Siege. As if she had said, when the People saw thee lay siege to the City, they said surely they will ask us if we will have Peace; and then we shall soon come to an Agreement, and make an end. Whereby she secretly remembers *Joab* of a Rule in the Law, *Deut.* xx. 10. which commands them to offer Peace to the Cities of other Nations, when they came to besiege them; and therefore much more to a City of their own, as *Abel* was. To

this purpose *R. Solomon Jarchi*; and it agrees well with what follows, that they were a peaceable People, and faithful to their Prince: And therefore would not have refused to yield, upon Summons, to him. *R. Levi Ben Gersom* gives another Sense of them; that *Sheba* and his Company, when they first came into the City, asked if they would follow him, and said no more: To whom the Men of the City answered, we are peaceable and faithful: That is, we cannot join with thee and rebel against King *David*. But there is a late Writer, who thinks the Words will bear this Sense: This was a common Saying in old Time, if any one asked whether *Abel* was a place of Justice and Judgment, or a Den of Thieves; the Answer was, they are an upright People. And therefore she asks *Joab* why he went about to destroy a City so famous for Virtue. Thus *Mayerus* in his *Annotations* on *Seder Olam Rabbi*, Cap. 14.

Ver. 19. *I am one of them that are peaceable and faithful in Israel:]* She speaks in the Name of the whole City: which was of a peaceable Temper; and had been faithful to *David* in the Time of the late Revolt.

*Thou seekest to destroy a City, and a Mother in Israel:]* A great City, which had many Towns depending on it; and therefore called a Mother.

*Why wilt thou swallow up the Inheritance of the LORD?] Do an Injury to the Publick; by depopulating a Part of the Country, which is God's peculiar.*

Ver. 20. *And Joab answered and said, Far be it, far be it, that I should swallow or destroy.]* Do you the least Hurt, if I can avoid it. He disclaims any ill Intentions twice, saith *R. Solomon*; as if he had said, far be it from me, far be it from the King to design any such Thing.

Ver. 21. *The Matter is not so:]* You are not rightly informed.

*But a Man of Mount Ephraim,]* He is said before (ver. 1.) to be of the Tribe of *Benjamin*: But he lived, I suppose, in *Mount Ephraim*.

*Sheba, the Son of Bichri by name, hath lift up his Hand against the King, even against David: deliver him only, and I will depart from the City.]* And leave all *Sheba's* Party at liberty to go home, without any Punishment.

*And the Woman said unto Joab, Behold, his Head shall be thrown unto thee over the Wall.]* She had reason to be confident that both the Citizens and Soldiers would be glad to save themselves, by giving up him, who had brought them into imminent Danger.

Ver. 22. *Then the Woman went unto all the People in her Wisdom,]* Desired they would all meet in the common Hall; where she told them what Terms she had made for them with *Joab*: unto which they immediately consented.

*And they cut off the head of Sheba, the Son of Bichri, and cast it out to Joab:]* It seems his Party was not strong in the City; or seeing it likely to be taken, they were glad to accept of the Conditions the Woman had made for them.

*And he blew the Trumpet, and retired from the City, every Man to his Tent:]* Raised the Siege, and went home.

*And Joab returned to Jerusalem unto the King.]* To give him an Account of his good Success.



Ver. 23. *Now Joab was over all the Host of Israel:]* Now that David was restored to his Kingdom, and established in it, he settled all the great Officers who were to govern under him: And continued Joab in the chief Command of the Army, which was so much at his devotion, that he found it dangerous to displace him.

*And Benaiah the Son of Jehoiada was over the Cerethites, and over the Pelethites:]* As he was also before (viii. ult.) being a very valiant Man (xxiii. 20.) whom Solomon made Commander in chief of the whole Army (as now he was Captain of the King's Guards) after the Death of Joab

Ver. 24. *And Adoram was over the Tribute:]* Treasurer, or Receiver of the King's Revenue. Which Office was non settled before; because in the Beginning of his Reign, it is likely David had no great Revenue.

*And Jehoshaphat the Son of Abilud was Recorder:]* See upon viii. 16.

Ver. 25. *And Sheva was Scribe, and Zadok and Abiathar were Priests:]* It is uncertain whether Sheva be the same with Seraiah mentioned viii. 17. Or, Seraiah being dead or displaced, this Man came in his room. Concerning these Priests, see viii. 17.

Ver. 26. *And Ira also the Fairite]* He had his Original in the Country of Fair the Gileadite, on the other side Jordan (Numb. xxxii. 41.) who is not mentioned before, but now was made a great Officer.

*Was a chief ruler about David.]* The Hebrew Word *Cohen* (as hath been often observed) signifies any Minister, either Sacred, or Civil: A Priest, or a Prince. Instances of the last are many, and the Targum thus expounds it here, *Rab le David*, a Prince, or great Man about David. And so the Priest of On, Gen. xli. 50. and the Priest of Midian, Exod. ii. 26. signify the Prince or Ruler of On, and of Midian. As in Job xii. 19. We, following the Chaldee, translate it, *God leadeth Princes away spoiled.*

## CH A P. XXI.

Verse 1. **T**hen there was a famine in the days of David, three years, year after year,] The Jewish Doctors commonly say this Famine was before the Rebellion of Absalom. But Abarbinel will have it, that Things are related here in the Order wherein they were done; so that this was after that Rebellion was ended.

*And David inquired of the LORD,]* For what Sin so grievous a Punishment was inflicted: Suspecting (as Abarbinel thinks) God might still punish him for those Sins he committed in the Matter of Uriah.

*And the LORD answered, It is for Saul, and for his bloody House,]* God soon comforted him, by letting him know that this Punishment was upon the account of Saul and his Family, who had been deeply engaged in Blood.

*Because he slew the Gibeonites.]* When he slew the whole City of Nob (saith the same Abarbinel) where the Gibeonites lived, and served as Hewers of Wood and Drawers of Water to the Priests, whom Saul then cut off, 1 Sam. xxii.

18, 19. But the same great Man hereupon enquires, why God did not send this Famine rather for the Slaughter of the Priests, than of the Gibeonites? Of which he gives this Account, that the Slaughter of the Priests was punished before, by the Slaughter of Saul and of his Sons, in the Battle with the Philistines, 1 Sam. xxxi. and now he was punished in the Sons of his Concubines, and all Israel suffered with them by Famine, because they did not hinder him from murdering the Gibeonites, by remembering him of the Oath which was made to them; nay, perhaps, they approved of what he did, being glad to see the Land rid of Foreigners. But why this Judgment was not executed before, may seem strange, till we consider, as he observes, that the Counsels of God are profound; and he hath excellent Reasons, why he punishes Sinners not now, but hereafter: And knows which of their Children are most worthy to be punished, and bear the iniquity of their Fathers. And the longer he stays before he strikes, the more evident it is, that he doth not forget what the evil Men have done, though he doth not presently declare his Anger against it. He observes also, that the Gibeonites being Drawers of Water, God put the Israelites in mind of their Offence, by with-holding Rain from them: Just as his refusing to answer Saul by Urim, was a suitable Punishment for his murdering the Priests who consulted God by that Oracle.

Ver. 2. *And the King called the Gibeonites, and said unto them (now the Gibeonites were not of the children of Israel, but of the remnant of the Amorites, and the Children of Israel had sworn unto them: and Saul sought to slay them in his Zeal to the Children of Israel and Judah)]* Which transported him to violate a solemn Oath: As many since have done, under pretence of the publick Good.

Ver. 3. *Wherefore David said unto the Gibeonites, What shall I do for you?]* He asks them what Satisfaction they desired, for the Wrong that had been done them. Which may seem strange, unless we suppose, as Josephus doth, that God told him when he consulted him, not only for what Crime he sent this Punishment, but that he should take, *δωκὴν ἢ αὐτοὶ θέλουν*, such a Revenge for it, as the Gibeonites would have. Besides, they had never made any Complaint to David of the Injury which had been done them: Who might therefore be the kinder to them, and give them leave to name the Recompence that should be made them.

*And wherewith shall I make an atonement, that ye may bless the Inheritance of the LORD?]* Pray to God to be pacified also; and to restore Plenty unto Israel again.

Ver. 4. *And the Gibeonites answered unto him, We will have no Silver nor Gold of Saul, nor of his House; neither for us shalt thou kill any Man in Israel.]* Except those that they afterwards mentioned. For they seem to have been People truly profelyted to the Jewish Religion; who desired nothing but equal Justice; that Men should suffer as they have done: And therefore Saul having not taken away their Money, but their Lives; they desired only that the Lives of some of his Family might pay for it.

And



And he said, *What you shall say, that will I do for you.*] If they had desired Money, or any thing else that was in his power, they might have had it.

Ver. 5. *And they answered the King, The man that consumed us, and that devised against us that we should be destroyed from remaining in any of the Coasts of Israel.*] He intended, if not to kill, yet to banish them all: Which had been worse than Death; for it would have deprived them of the Liberty of worshipping the true God.

Ver. 6. *Let seven Men of his Sons be delivered unto us.*] Some imagine, that at the first they demanded all the House of Saul to be delivered up unto them: But upon cooler Thoughts they demanded only seven Persons.

*And we will hang them up unto the LORD*] To appease his Anger, and vindicate his Honour. Some think this was a barbarous Custom in those Days (which certainly prevailed in future Times) to hang Men up, to appease the Anger of their Gods, in time of Famine. Which *Johannes Geusius* fancies the *Gibeonites* had formerly used, and now propounded it to *David* as a Means to make the Earth more fruitful, *De Victimis Humanis, Pars 1. Cap. 14. p. 310, &c.* and *P. 2. Cap. 14. p. 312.* which he imagines to be the Reason why it is observed (*ver. 2.*) that the *Gibeonites* were not of the Children of *Israel*, but of the Remnant of the *Amorites*: To shew whence this horrid Superstition proceeded; of which some Tang still remained amongst them. The Vulgar here translates it, *ut crucifigamus eos*, that we may crucify them. Which misled *Serrarius* and some others into this Error, that Crucifixion was a Punishment anciently among the *Jews*: Which *Casaubon*, *Selden*, and several other great Men have shewn to be false.

*In Gibeab of Saul.*] To make the Punishment the more remarkable and shameful: This being the City where he lived, both before and after he was King, *1 Sam. x. 26. xi. 4.*

*Whom the LORD did choose.*] This aggravated his Guilt, that he was so highly favoured by God, and yet obeyed not his Commands: But spared the *Amalekites*, whom God commanded him to destroy; and killed these poor *Gibeonites*, whom he was bound by the Oath of God to preserve.

*And the King said, I will give them.*] This seems to be contrary to the Divine Law, *Deut. xxiv. 16.* that the Son should not die for the Father's Fault. To which some of the *Jewish* Doctors thought it sufficient to answer, *It is better that one Letter should be taken out of the Law, than that the Name of God should be publicly profaned*: That is, that one Precept, rather than an Oath, should be broken. But there is no need of this; for, as *Abarbinel* judiciously observes, the Law in *Deuteronomy* is to be understood of Proceedings in Human Courts, not of the Divine Judgments; for God visits the Sins of the Fathers upon the Children unto the third and fourth Generation, *Exod. xx. 5.*

Ver. 7. *And the King spared Mephibosheth the Son of Jonathan, the Son of Saul, because of the LORD's Oath that was between them; between David and Jonathan the Son of Saul.*] Not merely his Affection to *Jonathan*, but his Dread

of breaking the Oath he had made to him, moved him to preserve *Mephibosheth*; lest he himself should incur the same Punishment which *Saul* fell under, for breaking the Oath made to the *Gibeonites*.

Ver. 8. *But the King took the two Sons of Rizpah the Daughter of Ajab.*] Who was a Concubine of *Saul*, as we read afterwards, *ver. 11.*

*Whom she bare unto Saul, Armoni and Mephibosheth.*] After whose Name perhaps *Mephibosheth* the Son of *Jonathan* was called.

*And five Sons of Michal the Daughter of Saul, whom she brought up*] In the *Hebrew*, *whom she bare*, i. e. which were born: According to an usual manner of speaking among the *Hebrews*; of which see *Dr. Hammond* upon *Luke xvi. Note b.*

*For Adriel*] It is plain from hence, that by *was born* is meant, as we translate it, *was brought up*. For *Michal* was not the Wife of *Adriel*, but was given to *Phaltiel*, *1 Sam. xxv. 44.* *Merab* her elder Sister being married to *Adriel*, *1 Sam. xviii. 19.* by whom she had these five Sons, whom *Michal* brought up, and therefore they are called her Children. Thus the *Jews* say, in the *Gemara Sanhedrin*, *Cap. 2. Merab brought them forth, and Michal educated them.* And the like we read (as they alledge for the Proof of this) *Gen. xxx. 3. L. 23.* See *Selden De Uxore Hebr. Lib. 1. Cap. 6.* *Kimchi* also here alledges the Words of the Women in *Ruth iv. 17.* *There is a Son born to Naomi*; who was not the Mother of it, but only laid it in her Bosom, and became Nurse to it, as is said in the precedent Verse. Thus also *Rasi*, *Rabag*, and a great many other *Jews*, following the *Chaldean Paraphrase*. And we have an Example of this in the *Heathen Writers*. For *Agamemnon* and *Menelaus* are called Sons of *Atreus*, because their Father being dead, he took care to bring them up. So *Eustathius* on the Second Book of the *Iliads*. *Plisthenes* (who was their Father) being dead, the Youths being bred up by *Atreus*, αὐτῷ παῖδες ἐκλήθησαν, they were called his Children.

*The Son of Barzillai the Meholathite.*] This last Word is intended to distinguish him from the other *Barzillai* the *Gileadite*: For this was of the Tribe of *Benjamin*, to which *Abel Meholab* belonged.

Ver. 9. *And he delivered them into the hands of the Gibeonites, and they hanged them in the bill before the LORD.*] In a conspicuous Place, where they might be seen by all that passed by. *David* did not command his Officers to hang them up, but delivered them to the *Gibeonites*, that they might dispose of them as they pleased.

*And they fell all seven together, and were put to death in the days of harvest, in the first days, in the beginning of barley-harvest.*] That is, say the *Jews*, on the sixteenth of *Nisan*, a little after the Passover.

Ver. 10. *And Rizpah the Daughter of Ajab took sackcloth, and spread it for her upon the rock.*] It is probable, she both made a Tent of it to dwell in, and spread it upon the Ground to lie upon.

*From the beginning of Harvest, until water dropped upon them out of Heaven.*] From the sixteenth of *Nisan* (as the *Hebrew* Doctors understand it)



'till the seventeenth of *Marchesvan*; that is, from the middle of our *March* to the middle of *October*; when God shewed he was reconciled, by sending Showers down upon the Earth; which might be, for any thing we know, in the middle of Summer. And indeed *Abarbinel* thinks this Opinion of their Doctors is not true; but that the plain Meaning is, they hung from the beginning of Harvest, 'till God was intreated for the Land, and was pleased to send them Rain; for want of which, they suffered by Famine. And he thinks it probable, that not long after they were hung up, they had plentiful Showers by the good Providence of God, though it was Summer-time; whereby it appeared God was appeased: But by their hanging there several Days, it is manifest this was not a Legal Punishment (and therefore *David* committed it to the *Gibeonites*, and did not execute it by his own Officers) but an extraordinary one, inflicted by those who were not bound by that Law, *Deut.* xxii. 24. which in this case was violated.

*And suffered neither the Birds of the air to rest on them by day, nor the Beasts of the field by night.]* She had Servants no doubt to attend her, who kept a constant Watch Day and Night, to fright away the Birds and Beasts.

Ver. 11. *And it was told David what Rizpah the Daughter of Ajab, Saul's Concubine, had done.]* Which did not displease him, nor the *Gibeonites* neither (as far as appears) but was accounted a laudable thing; which excited *David* to the Imitation of her. I observed before, that *Saul* had but one Wife, and we read of no more than this one Concubine; which shews his Moderation in some things, which was praise-worthy.

Ver. 12. *And David went and took the bones of Saul, and the bones of Jonathan his Son, from the men of Jabesh-Gilead, which had stolen them from the street of Beth-shan, where the Philistines had hanged them, when the Philistines had slain Saul in Gilboa.]* See 1 *Sam.* xxxi. 10. This noble Act of *Rizpah* moved *David* to do some Honour to the Carcases of her Sons, and to the whole House of *Saul*: And for that End he sent for the Bones of *Saul* and *Jonathan*, to inter them and those Children of *Saul's* with their Ancestors. Which piece of Generosity demonstrated that he had no personal Enmity to the Family of *Saul*.

Ver. 13. *And he brought up from thence the bones of Saul, and the bones of Jonathan his Son;]* From under the Tree where they were buried in *Jabesh*, 1 *Sam.* xxxi. 13.

*And they gathered the bones of them that were hanged.]* Which seems to have been done some time after they were taken down, when nothing but their Bones remained; and then they had all seven an honourable Interment, as it here follows.

Ver. 14. *And the bones of Saul, and of Jonathan his Son]* Together with those now mentioned.

*Buried they in the Country of Benjamin in Zelab,]* Which was in that Tribe, *Josh.* xviii. 28.

*In the Sepulchre of Kish his Father;]* It was accounted very desirable to be buried with their Parents; as appears by old *Barzillai*, xix. 37.

*And they performed all that the King commanded:]* They that were employed in this Business, gave them a solemn Burial, with all the Mourning that was usual in the Funerals of Kings; as the *Hebrew* Doctors expound it.

*And after that God was intreated for the land.]* When Satisfaction was given to the *Gibeonites* for the Injuries done to them, God restored Plenty to the Country.

Ver. 15. *Moreover, the Philistines had yet war again with Israel,]* That is, after all the Wars before-mentioned in this Book with the *Philistines*, they again disturbed *David's* Repose in the latter End of his Reign. Some indeed will have these Wars to have been presently after the War with the *Ammonites* was ended; before the Rebellion of *Absalom*. But *Abarbinel*, I think, well resolves, that the History of this War is not misplaced, but that it fell out not long after the Famine before-mentioned.

*And David went down, and his Servants with him,]* It is not said where this Battle was fought (as the Place of the other three following is mentioned) but it is likely to have been near to the Country of the *Philistines*; unto which *David* went down; for it lay low, towards the Sea-side.

*And fought against the Philistines; and David waxed faint.]* Being in his declining Years; or rather of a great Age, and much worn out by various Troubles and Afflictions.

Ver. 16. *And Ishbi-benob, which was of the Sons of the giant]* That is, of *Goliath*; who by way of Eminency is called the Giant; though *Bochartus* thinks the *Hebrew* Word *Rapha* signifies any Giant; and so these Words should be translated, *of the Race of the Giants*, i. e. of the *Anakims* who fled into this Country, particularly to *Gath*, when *Joshua* expelled them from *Canaan*, *Josh.* xi. 22.

*(The weight of whose spear weighed three hundred Shekels of brass in weight)]* This is to be understood of the Head of his Spear, which weighed half as much as that of *Goliath*, 1 *Sam.* xvii. 7.

*He being girded with a new Sword,]* The Word *Sword* is not in the *Hebrew*; nor is there any thing remarkable in his having a new Sword; therefore it should be translated, *with a new kind of Weapon*, or rather, *with a new Belt*; which had been bestowed upon him as a Reward of some great Exploit which he had done; or as a Token of some new Honour, or Command conferred upon him in the Army. See xviii. 11.

*Thought to have slain David.]* Being stronger than he; and having him at an advantage, when by some Accident, he was separated from his Army; as *Josephus* understands it.

Ver. 17. *But Abishai succoured him.]* Cam in seasonably to his Relief.

*And smote the Philistine, and killed him.]* The Words leave it doubtful whether he was slain by *Abishai*, or by *David*. Our Translation seems to incline to the former: but if *David* was not the Person that killed him, I do not see how that can be verified, which is said in the End of this Chapter, that all these Giants fell by the hand of *David* and of his Servants; for he slew none of them, unless it were this.

*Then*



Then the Men of David swear to him, saying, Thou shalt go no more out with us to battle,] They had advised this before, when they went to fight with Absalom, xviii. 3. But now they peremptorily decreed it, and solemnly confirmed it with an Oath.

That thou quench not the Light of Israel.] Left he should be killed, and thereby they should lose the Glory of having such a King reign over them; for good Kings are called the Light of their People (1 Kings xi. 36. xv. 4.) because By their wise Government, Conduct and Courage, they made their People happy and illustrious.

Ver. 18. And it came to pass after this, that there was a Battle again with the Philistines at Gob:] Which was also called Gezer, as Abarbinel thinks, 1 Chron. xx. 4. Or, they were so near one another, that the Battle was in the Confines of both.

Then Sibbechai the Hushathite] One of David's Worthies, 1 Chron. xi. 29.

Slew Saph, which was of the Sons of the Giant.] One of the same Race of the Rephaims; who seem to be descended from the Anakims.

Ver. 19. And there was again a battle in Gob with the Philistines,] This was a Place, it seems, very proper for Armies to draw up in; for here they fought twice.

Where Elhanan the Son of Jaare-Oregim a Bethlehemite,] He is simply called the Son of Jaar, 1 Chron. xx. 5. and is reckoned among David's Worthies, 1 Chron. xi. 26. and there said to be the Son of Dodo; who, I suppose, was his Grandfather.

Slew the Brother of Goliath the Gittite,] The Word Brother is supplied out of 1 Chron. xx. 5. where his Name is said to be Labmi.

The Staff of whose Spear was like a Weaver's beam.] 1 Sam. xvii. 7.

Ver. 20. And there was yet a battle in Gath,] In the Territory belonging to it.

Where was a Man of great stature,] The LXX translate it; a Man of Madon: who was born, that is, in a Place called by that Name.

That had on every hand six Fingers, and on every foot six Toes, twenty-four in number;] If we may believe Tavernier (in his Relation of the Grand Signior's Seraglio, p. 95.) the eldest Son of the Emperor of Java, who reigned in the Year 1648, when he was in that Island, had six Fingers on each Hand, and as many Toes on each Foot; all of equal length.

And he also was born to the Giant.] Was one of the Rephaim of that Country.

Ver. 21. And when he defied Israel,] In imitation of the great Giant Goliath, confiding, as he did, in his monstrous Strength.

Jonathan, the Son of Shimea, the Brother of David, slew him.] We read of this Brother of David in 1 Sam. xvi. 9. where he is called Shammah. But this Son of his is not reckoned among David's Worthies, 1 Chron. xi.

Ver. 22. These four were born to the Giant in Gath,] Here Rapha seems to signify Goliath, the most famous Giant; if one of them had not been his Brother.

And fell by the hand of David, and by the hand of his Servants.] The first of them was slain by David (Abishai assisting) the rest

by the great Men, who were about him. See ver. 17.

## CHAP. XXII.

Verse 1. **A**ND David spake unto the LORD the words of this Song, in the day that the LORD had delivered him out of the hand of his Enemies,] It is commonly thought David penned this Psalm, towards the End of his Life, after all the Victories mentioned in the foregoing Chapter. Thus Rasi, in the Time of his old Age, and Kimchi, in the Conclusion of his Day: But Abarbinel, who contends earnestly that all things fall out in the Order wherein they are related in this Book, is of a quite different Opinion here; and will have it that he composed this Song in his Youth, in the midst of all his Straits and Difficulties; out of which when God delivered him, he sung this Song of Praise unto him. So that by the Words, in the Day that the LORD delivered him, he thinks is meant, that every time he received any Deliverance from God, his usual Method was to acknowledge it thankfully in the Words of this Song; which was composed at first for his own private Use: But in the End of his Days, he thought fit to communicate it to others; and therefore put it into the Book of Psalms, that it might serve for the use of those which might be in the like Straits, and receive the like Mercies. And then also he reviewed it, and made several Alterations in it; which, little and great, amount, as he observes, to seventy-four in Number. And this he did, as he thinks, to make his Meaning plainer; and that the People might not mistake it. And there is some ground for part of what he saith; for the xviiiith Psalm is directed to the Chief Musician; which shews it was then intended for publick Use: Whereas here is nothing said of that, and therefore it is probable it remained for some time a piece of private Devotion.

And out of the hand of Saul.] He may be thought to be comprehended under the Name of his Enemies: But they (as the same Abarbinel observes) were properly the People of other Nations, who made War upon him; of whom he speaks in Psal. cxxxix. 21, 22. Do not I hate them that hate thee? &c. I account them mine Enemies. Now though Saul cruelly persecuted David, yet it did not become David to call him his Enemy, and one that he hated: For he loved Saul, and therefore doth not number him among his Enemies; but in a particular manner, to distinguish him from them, adds, and out of the hand of Saul.

Ver. 2. And he said, the LORD is my Rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer,

Ver. 3. The God of my Rock, in him will I trust: he is my Shield, and the horn of my Salvation, my high Tower, and my Refuge, my Saviour: thou savest me from violence.] This great Heap of Metaphors, as Strigelius observes, is a large Paraphrase upon the first Commandment; declaring God alone to be his Confidence: In whom he placed all his Strength, Safety, Security and Happiness. The Consequence of which is, that we should love God with all our



our Heart, and Soul, and Strength (as *Moses* adds after that Precept, *Deut.* vi. 4, 5. x. 12.) and therefore *David* adds that, when he reviewed this Psalm; and begins it thus; *I will love thee, O LORD, my Strength, &c. Psalm.* xviii. 1. See my Paraphrase upon that Psalm; where I have sufficiently explained these Verses.

Ver. 4. *I will call upon the LORD, who is worthy to be praised: so shall I be saved from mine Enemies.*] See in that Psalm; where there are the very same Words. Upon which the forenamed *Strigelius* piously observes; that as the *Πανοπλία* of a Soldier doth him no Service, unless he put it on, to defend himself and offend his Enemy, so no Protection, or Help from God is to be expected (who is so powerful as before described) unless we apply our selves unto him by Prayer and Praises.

Ver. 5. *When the Waves of Death compassed me about, and the Floods of ungodly Men made me afraid.*] These Words in this Verse differ from the Words in *Psalm* xviii. but the Sense is the same: That he was in a sinking Condition, and saw no way to escape; being over-power'd by Troops of ungodly Men, who like a Torrent threaten'd to sweep him away.

Ver. 6. *The Sorrows of Hell compassed me about, and the Snares of Death prevented me.*] He was so intangled in their Snares, that he had no more Power to help himself, than a dead Man bound Head and Foot in his Grave. For so the Word *Sheol*, which we translate *Hell*, here signifies.

Ver. 7. *In my Distress I called upon the LORD, and cried to my God.*] He did not despair when he was at this plunge; but made his Addressee to him who is Omnipotent: Most earnestly beseeching him to deliver him, as he had often done.

*And he did hear my Voice out of his Temple, and my Cry did enter into his Ears.*] There is very little Difference between these Words and those in *Psalm* xviii. The Meaning of which is, that God gave him a gracious Answer from his Sanctuary, or from Heaven (of which the Sanctuary was a Type) and shewed that he was sensibly touched with his Affliction.

Ver. 8. *Then the Earth shook and trembled:*] The Terror which God struck into his Enemies, is compared to an Earthquake: Which makes every body tremble, as it did the Jaylor, *Acts* xvi. 29.

*The Foundations of Heaven moved and shook,*] In *Psalm* xviii. the Words are, *the Foundations of the Hills*: Which explains what he here means by *Heaven*, viz. Mountains lifted up to Heaven. Or, he represents the Dread which fell upon his Enemies, by the Consternation which an Earthquake causes, when it is accompanied with Thunder, Lightning, and Hail from Heaven, in a great Tempest. We do not read that there were literally such Storms, Tempests and Earthquakes for *David's* Deliverance: But if there were, it need not seem strange, when prophane History informs us of God's interposing after this manner, in some Cases. For *Strigelius* observes out of *Livy*, that in the eighth Year of the second *Punic* War, when *Hannibal* and the *Romans* were drawn up in Battel and ready to fight (upon which the Fortune of the City of *Rome* depended) there fell such a Shower of

Rain and Hail, as confounded both Armies: So that being scarce able to hold their Arms, they retreated unto their Camps. And on the next Day, in the very same Place, the like Tempest parted them: And as soon as they came into their Camps, there was a wonderful Serenity and Tranquillity.

*Because he was wroth.*] Highly displeased at their Enmity to *David*.

Ver. 9. *There went up a Smoke out of his Nostrils, and Fire out of his Mouth devoured: Coals were kindled at it.*] These are very high Metaphors, to express the most flaming Degree of Anger; and the dreadful Effects of it.

Ver. 10. *He bowed the Heavens also and came down: and Darkness was under his feet.*] The Divine Majesty appeared in a glorious Cloud, descending from Heaven: Which at the bottom was all dark; but above, bright and shining, with an amazing Lustre.

Ver. 11. *He rode upon a Cherub,*] To ride, in the *Hebrew* Language (as *Maimonides* observes) is to rule, to govern, to manage with an absolute Power, that on which one is said to ride; and to dispose of it as he pleases. *More Nervo-chim*, P. 1. Cap. 70. And therefore to ride upon a Cherub, or to make the Clouds his Chariot (which is the very same, because Angels were wont to appear in bright Clouds) is to send his Heavenly Ministers whither he thinks good, to execute his Pleasure.

*And did fly:*] Made haste to succour and relieve *David*, when he was in great Distress.

*And he was seen upon the Wings of the Wind.*] A rapid Wind shewed that he was present to overturn all Opposition. See *1 Sam.* v. 24.

Ver. 12. *And he made Darkness Pavillions round about him, dark Waters, and thick Clouds of the Skies.*] This is still a Description of the Angelical Powers, who surrounded him on all sides as his Ministers; ready to be employed, which way he thought fit to send them. For *Andreas Casariensis* truly observes in his Commentary on the *Revelation*, that whensoever we read in the Sacred Books of Clouds, or thick Darkness, we are always to understand, ὑπεργὰρ τῶν θεῶν πραγμάτων, some Ministry ready to serve in Divine Affairs.

Ver. 13. *Through the Brightness before him were Coals of Fire kindled.*] Those Heavenly Ministers going forth from his Glorious Presence, sent Hail-stones and Lightnings (as in the Days of *Joshua*, x. 11.) in the Face of his Enemies.

Ver. 14. *The LORD thundered from Heaven, the most High uttered his Voice.*] Thunder is called the Voice of God, in *Psalm* xxix. Which he sent forth in such terrible Cracks accompanied with Flashes of Fire, that quite daunted his Enemies.

Ver. 15. *He sent out Arrows, and scattered them; Lightning, and discomfited them.*] These were the Weapons whereby they were vanquished; Lightnings were the Darts and Arrows that made them turn their Backs and run away.

Ver. 16. *And the Channels of the Sea appeared, the Foundations of the World were discovered at the rebuking of the LORD, at the blast of the Breath of his Nostrils.*] This is the Description of a great Earthquake, which rent it in sunder,



and made such Breaches in it, that the very Bottom of it was discovered. And this was the Effect of God's just Indignation against his Enemies.

Ver. 17. *He sent from above, he took me:]* He sent his Angels to rescue and protect David.

*He drew me out of many Waters.]* Delivered him from innumerable Dangers compared to Waters breaking out upon a Country, to overflow it.

Ver. 18. *He delivered me from my strong Enemy,]* First from Goliath, afterwards from many others, as we read in the foregoing Chapter xxi. 16, 17, &c.

*And from them that hated me:]* The Philistines, the Syrians, and other Nations; whose Hatred to him made them set themselves against him, to destroy him.

*For they were too strong for me.]* Their Forces were more numerous than his, and would have overpowered him, if the LORD had not been his Helper.

Ver. 19. *They prevented me in the Day of my Calamity: but the LORD was my Stay.]* When he was in a weak Condition, unable to defend himself, Saul suddenly came upon him, and had destroyed him, if the LORD had not been his Support. See 1 Sam. xxii. 9. xxiii. 14, 26. xxiv. 2, 3, &c.

Ver. 20. *He brought me forth also into a large Place:]* When his House, for instance, was beset by Saul's Officers, who watch'd to kill him, as he came out in the Morning; he escaped by the help of his Wife, and got to Samuel and Ramah, where he was at liberty to go whither he pleased, 1 Sam. xix. 11, 18.

*He delivered me, because he delighted in me.]* In many other Straits he afterwards delivered him: Because he had a Kindness for him, and resolved to make him King of Israel.

Ver. 21. *The LORD rewarded me according to my Righteousness: according to the Cleanness of my Hands hath he recompensed me.]* God knew also that he was innocent of what he was accused; and had no design to do Saul any hurt, 1 Sam. xxiv. 11, 12, &c. xxvi. 23.

Ver. 22. *For I have kept the ways of the LORD, and have not wickedly departed from my God.]* He took no unlawful Courses to preserve himself: But when Saul fell into his hands, he would not hurt him; because he was God's Anointed. See there 1 Sam. xxiv. 11, 12, 13. and xxvi. 19, &c.

Ver. 23. *For all his Judgments were before me:]* He made God's Commands the Rule of his Actions.

*And as for his Statutes, I did not depart from them.]* In Psalm xviii. the Words are, *I did not put away his Statutes from me:* That is, bid them stand aside, and give way to his Interest; but strictly observed them.

Ver. 24. *I was also upright before him, and kept my self from mine Iniquity.]* This is still spoken with respect to Saul. For though he offended afterwards grievously against God's Laws, yet he chose rather to suffer any thing than do Saul any harm: And nothing could tempt him to that Iniquity, unto which he was invited by fair Opportunities. 1 Sam. xxiv. 4. xxvi. 8, &c.

Ver. 25. *Therefore the LORD has recompensed me according to my Righteousness: according*

*to my Cleanness in his eye-sight.]* According to David's Prayer; which is very remarkable, 1 Sam. xxvi. 23. where he desires God to deal with him as he had dealt with Saul: With whose Blood he would not defile his Hands, when it was in his power to take Revenge.

Ver. 26. *With the merciful thou wilt shew thy self merciful, and with the upright Man thou wilt shew thy self upright.]* This is the common Method of God's Providence, to do good to those that do good to others: And to do them Justice, who do not swerve from the Rules of Righteousness when they are injuriously treated by their Neighbours.

Ver. 27. *With the Pure thou wilt shew thy self pure:]* Faithfully keep his Promises to those who are faithful to him.

*And with the Froward thou wilt shew thy self unsavory.]* Declare how much he distastes and abhors those that take deceitful Courses to bring about their Ends: In Psalm xviii. the Words are, *with the Froward thou wilt shew thy self froward;* that is, he insnares those in their own Devices, who perversely take crooked Ways to compass their Designs: which unexpectedly end in their Destruction.

Ver. 28. *And the afflicted People thou wilt save: but thine Eyes are upon the haughty, that thou mayst bring them down.]* He is wont to deliver poor helpless People, who humbly depend on him, and not on any unlawful Means for Safety: But he contrives Ways to lay those low, who (proud of their Power) insolently oppress them.

Ver. 29. *For thou art my Lamp, O LORD: and the LORD will lighten my Darkness.]* David himself was an instance of this; whom from a despicable, God raised to an illustrious Condition: and when he concluded he should perish (1 Sam. xxvii. 1.) advanced him to Royal Splendor and Greatness.

Ver. 30. *For by thee I have run through a Troop: by my God I have leaped over a Wall.]* Now he seems to celebrate the wonderful Works of God, after the Persecution of Saul was over, and he was made King. When numerous Enemies assaulted him; but he broke and scattered them all. And particularly (which seems to be meant by the last Words) he scaled the highest Walls, whereby his Enemies thought themselves securely defended. See Chap. v. of this Book, ver. 6, 7, &c.

Ver. 31. *As for God, his Way is perfect:]* By the Way of God, here seems to be meant his Counsels, Proceedings and Methods of his Providence: Which for the present may appear to us perplexed: but in the issue will be seen to be perfectly just, and agreeable to his Promises; as it here follows.

*The Word of the LORD is tried:]* The Experience of all good Men tells us, that he never failed to be true to his Word: which is freer from all Deceit, than the most refined Gold is from Dross.

*He is a Buckler to all them that trust in him.]* So that none can hurt those that put themselves under his Protection, with a pious Confidence in him.

Ver. 32. *For who is God, save the LORD?] For none can defeat his Intentions, or resist his Will.*

And



*And who is a Rock save our God?*] There are none so powerful, as to be able to hurt those whom he will protect; or to defend those whom he will destroy. Of this word *Rock*, see *Deut.* xxxii. 4, 31.

Ver. 33. *God is my Strength and Power:]* What great Men would *Scipio* and others have been, if they had been possessed with such a Sense of God, as to have acknowledged that all their Courage, and Conduct, and mighty Victories were owing to his Power. But no Warrior was ever like to *David*, who had God in all his Thoughts, and acknowledged all his great Acts to be performed by the Divine Aid.

*And he maketh my Way perfect.]* Removed all Obstacles out of his way, to the compleating of his Conquests. See v. 10.

Ver. 34. *He maketh my Feet like Hind's Feet:]* This is commonly thought to relate to the Swiftnefs of *Hinds*; and so I have taken it in my Paraphrase on the *Psalms*: But *Bochartus* hath made it probable, that it hath respect to the Firmness of their treading; which is very remarkable, as he shews in his *Hieroicoicon*, P. 1. Lib. 3. C. 17.

*And setteth me upon my high Places.]* He was enabled to pursue his Enemies with great Celerity, and without tripping: Even unto such Places, as for their Height and Cragginess were thought inaccessible.

Ver. 35. *He teaches my Hands to war: so that a Bow of Steel is broken by mine Arms.]* He ascribes all his Strength and Dexterity to God: Who enabled him to wrest the strongest Bow out of his Enemies hands, and break it in pieces.

Ver. 36. *Thou hast also given me the Shield of thy Salvation:]* And when he was in great Dangers, God protected him: As he did in the Battel mentioned in the foregoing Chapter (ver. 16, 17.) when *Ishbi-benoth* had slain him, if *Abishai* had not stept in for his timely Succour.

*And thy Gentleness hath made me great.]* These wonderful Deliverances he could ascribe to nothing but the tender Mercy of God to him, when he was unworthy of his Favour.

Ver. 37. *Thou hast enlarged my Steps under me: so that my Feet did not slip.]* When he was in great Straits, and beset with Difficulties, God opened a wide Passage; and made all things succeed according to his Desire. For that seems to be meant by his *Feet did not slip*, but he went on smoothly.

Ver. 38. *I have pursued mine Enemies and destroyed them: and turned not again till I had consumed them.]* He got compleat Victories over the *Philistines*, *Moabites*, *Syrians*, and *Ammonites*. See Chapter viii. and x. of this Book.

Ver. 39. *I have consumed them, and wounded them, that they could not arise:]* Gave them such a Blow, that they were not able to renew the Fight.

*Yea, they are fallen under my Feet.]* Submitted themselves unto him and served him. See x. 19.

Ver. 40. *For thou hast girded me with Strength to the Battel: them that rose up against me, hast thou subdued under me.]* This was remarkably fulfilled in the Rebellion of *Abalom*; when he was in a feeble Condition, and had but few Followers: But God gave them Courage

to fight, and such Success in the Battel, that they routed his Army; and all *Israel* was brought under his Obedience. See Chapter xviii.

Ver. 41. *Thou hast also given me the Necks of my Enemies, that I might destroy them that hate me.]* This also was literally fulfilled, when *Sheba* raised a new Rebellion; and his Head was thrown over the Wall of *Abel* to *Joab*, Chap. xx.

Ver. 42. *They looked, but there was none to save.]* In *Psalms* xviii. it is, *they cried: Which* may signify that they sought for Help from their Allies and Confederates: But to no purpose.

*Even unto the LORD, but he answered them not.]* And it was too late, when other Help failed them, to seek for Help from God: For he had deserted them, and would not hear their Prayers.

Ver. 43. *Then did I beat them as small as the Dust of the Earth,]* In *Psalms* xviii. the Words are, *as the Dust before the Wind.* He so entirely vanquished them, that they had no more Power than the small Dust of the Earth; which is tossed up and down with every blast of Wind.

*I did stamp them as the Mire of the Street, and did spread them abroad.]* In the forenamed *Psalms*, *I did cast them out as the Dirt in the Street.* That is, made them as contemptible as the Dirt in the Street, which every one tramples under his Feet.

Ver. 44. *Thou hast also delivered me from the Strivings of the People, thou hast made me the Head of the Heathen:]* The first part of these Words relates to the Union of the People of *Israel* and *Judah* under his Government, after long Contentions between them, v. 1, 2, &c. The other part to the Enlargement of his Kingdom by subduing his neighbouring Heathen People under him, Chap. viii. 10.

*A People whom I have not known shall serve me.]* Such as the *Syrians* of *Zobab*, and *Rehob*, and *Ish-tob*, and *Maachab*: Of which *David*, it is likely, had no knowledge, 'till they came to help the *Ammonites*, x. 8.

Ver. 45. *Strangers shall submit themselves unto me: as soon as they hear, they shall be obedient to me.]* The very Report of his Victories, made some heartily submit themselves unto him: And others dissembled their Hostility, and offered him their Service, x. 19.

Ver. 46. *Strangers shall fade away,]* Fall as withered Leaves do from the Trees.

*They shall be afraid out of their close Places.]* Distrusting their strong-holds, that they came creeping out with Fear, to surrender up themselves into his hands.

Ver. 47. *The LORD liveth, and blessed be my Rock:]* To him he desires all the Praise may be ascribed; in whose Eternal Power alone he still confided.

*And exalted be the God of the Rock of my Salvation.]* He desires again the LORD might be magnified with the highest Praises: Who had not only preserved him from perishing, but exalted him to be King of *Israel*. For so the last Words are in the *Hebrew*, *exalted be God, the Rock of my Salvation.* Who safely preserved and delivered him; and now advanced him most graciously to the highest Dignity.



Ver. 48. *It is God that avengeth me, and that bringeth down the People under me,]* He did not avenge himself, but left it to God to plead his Cause: Who not only punished those that were injurious to him, but brought many Nations under his Empire.

Ver. 49. *And that bringeth me forth from mine Enemies: thou also hast lifted me up on high above them that rose up against me:]* In these Words David made some small Alteration, when he inserted this Hymn into the Book of *Psalms* for publick Use. Of which, *Abarbinel* endeavours to give a Reason; but he seems too curious in his Observations. The plainest and most certain of which is this: that the first part of these Words respect the Nations whom he subdued; who were properly his Enemies: And the latter the Children of *Israel*, when they rose up against him to dethrone him.

*Thou hast delivered me from the violent Man.]* After he had delivered him from *Saul*, who violently persecuted him a long time.

Ver. 50. *Therefore will I give thanks unto thee, O LORD, among the Heathen, and I will sing Praises unto thy Name.]* He resolved to make his thankful Acknowledgements unto God, every where: So as to make those Nations whom he had subdued sensible that he ascribed all his Victories unto him. In honour of whom he would sing this perpetual Song.

Ver. 51. *He is the Tower of Salvation for his King:]* As he was a King by God's Appointment, and not by Usurpation; so he trusted in him for the Support of his Authority.

*And sheweth mercy unto his Anointed, unto David, and to his Seed for evermore.]* And he hoped the same Mercy which had promoted him to this Dignity, would be continued to him and to his Posterity 'till the coming of the great King *Messiah*: Whose Kingdom shall have no End. See vii. 12, 13.

## CHAP. XXIII.

Verse 1. **N**OW these are the last Words of David: He spake other Words recorded in the next Chapter, and in the next Book, before he died: But these were the last Words that he spake by the Holy Ghost, as *Abarbinel* expounds them. Who observes, that after he had composed the Book of *Psalms*, and added the Hymn mentioned in the foregoing Chapter, unto it; then he spake these Words; after which the Influence of the Holy Spirit resided on him no more. The *Chaldee* Paraphrase (which was always highly esteemed by the *Jews*) takes these Words, as if they were a Prophecy of the *Messiah*: For so it expounds them; *These are the Words of the Prophecy of David, which he prophesied of the Consummation of all things, in the Day of Consolation, which is to come.*

*David the Son of Jesse said,]* He remembers his low Condition, when God was pleased to make choice of him to be a King.

*The Man who was raised up on high,]* From feeding his Father's Sheep, to rule the People of *Israel*.

*The Anointed of the God of Jacob,]* The *Chaldee* hath it, anointed by the WORD of the God of *Jacob*.

*The sweet Psalmist of Israel, said,]* Who was inspired to compose many delightful Hymns in the Praises of God.

Ver. 2. *The Spirit of God spake by me, and his Word was in my Tongue.]* He would not have those Hymns, nor what he spake now, looked upon as human Compositions: But as proceeding from a Divine Influence, conferred upon him by the Holy Ghost.

Ver. 3. *The God of Israel said, the Rock of Israel spake to me,]* By *Nathan*, or by *Samuel*.

*He that ruleth over Men must be just, ruling in the Fear of God: Or, as we render it in the Margin, Be thou Ruler over, &c. which the Chaldee expounds of the Messiah in this manner, The faithful God spake (so he interprets the word Rock) I will constitute to me a King, he is the MESSIAH, who shall arise, and reign in the Fear of the LORD. But this relates first to David, the Type of Christ; who was taught to rule justly, and in the Fear of God: That is, in the exact Observance of all the Divine Laws. Or, as Abarbinel interprets it, When he that rules Men is just, then the Fear of the LORD will rule and have dominion in the Earth: For all the People are apt to tread in the Steps of their King. So that when he that rules is just, it is as if he did not rule, but the Fear of the LORD ruled in the Earth.*

Ver. 4. *And he shall be as the Light of the Morning when the Sun ariseth,]* The Dominion of the just (as the same *Abarbinel* interprets it) shall be as the Morning Light when the Sun ariseth, and the Light continually increases.

*Even a Morning without Clouds;]* Which hinder the Rays of the Sun from piercing through unto the Earth.

*As the tender Grass springing out of the Earth by clear shining after Rain.]* We have in this Translation quite transposed the *Hebrew* Words, where they run thus, *from Splendor and from Rain, Grass out of the Earth.* The Sense of which *Abarbinel* thinks is this; it shall be such a Morning, in which there is sometimes Sun-shine, and sometimes Showers of Rain, to make Grass spring out of the Earth.

Ver. 5. *Although my House be not so with God; yet he hath made with me an everlasting Covenant, ordered in all things and sure:]* Which he thus interprets; Although the Kingdom of a just Man, by little and little grows and increases; and sometimes is clouded, and sometimes the Light shines upon it: The Kingdom of *David* shall not be so, but God hath made a perpetual Covenant, &c.

*For this is all my Salvation, and all my Desire, although he makes it not to grow.]* Or, as he interprets it, This is all my Salvation, and my Desire, that he would not make it grow or shoot up (for that supposes it to be buried) but that, as was said before, it may always remain in an equal manner ordered and conserved.

It must be acknowledged, that there are no Words so obscure in this Book, as these two Verses. The Sense of which *Ludovicus de Dieu* seems to me to have most clearly opened. The Stability



Stability and Perpetuity of his Kingdom, faith he, *David* amplifies by a Comparison from three natural Things, which are very grateful to Men; but not constant and stable; in a settled Order, and sure. For the Sun arises, but goes down again; and the Morning may be clear, but Clouds afterwards arise; and the tender Grass springs up, but withers away. Not so, faith he, is my Kingdom before God. It is flourishing, like all these, but perpetual: For he hath made an everlasting Covenant with me; though some Afflictions have befallen me; and he hath not made all my Salvation and Desire to grow. So he makes the first *Caph* of Similitude to stand for *three*; and to be repeated thrice, in this manner.

*The God of Israel said, the Rock of Israel spake concerning me; the just Man ruleth among Men: He ruleth in the Fear of God. And as the Sun ariseth, with a shining Light; as the Morning is without Clouds, by reason of its Splendor; as from Rain the tender Grass springs out of the Earth: Yet (or truly) so is not my House with God. Because he hath made an everlasting Covenant with me; disposed in all Things, and well kept and preserved in that Order. Although he doth not make all my Salvation and Desire to grow (that is, though some Adversities happen to me and my Family) yet that always remains, which in the Covenant of God made with me, is in all Things orderly, disposed, and preserved.*

Ver. 6. *But the Sons of Belial shall be all of them as Thorns thrust away, because they cannot be taken with Hands.]* The Kingdom of impious Men shall not be like the Kingdom of the House of *David*: Being so far from being like to Grass, which is useful, that they are rather like Thorns, which are rejected as hurtful and pernicious. That is, such wicked Men are not fit for human Society.

Ver. 7. *But the Man that shall touch them, must be fenced with Iron, and with the Staff of a Spear.]* If any body will meddle with them, it must be at his peril. For so the word *Fimmale* (which we translate *fenced*) signifies, *shall be filled*, with the Iron and the Staff of a Spear. Spears are never used to cut down Thorns; but Iron gives one a sore Wound, like that which a Man receives from a Spear, when it runs into his Body, Iron and Wood withal. So the same *de Dieu* very judiciously.

*And they shall be utterly burnt with fire in the same Place.]* Therefore Men burn them with Fire, in the same Place where they grow: And so wicked Men are destroyed, where they think themselves most secure. Which the *Targum* applies to the Judgment of the great Day, saying, *Their Punishment is in the hand of Man; but they shall be burnt up utterly, when the House of the great Judgment appears: That they may sit on the Throne of Judgment, to judge the World.*

Ver. 8. *These be the Names of the mighty Men, whom David had;]* Now follows a Catalogue of those valiant Men, who help'd to raise *David* to his Dignity, and preserve him in it: Being continually with him in all his Wars. There is a List of them in *1 Chron. xi.* very different from this in several Things. But *Abarbinel*

thinks that it creates no Difficulty, if we do but observe, that there he distinguishes them into *three Classes*: Those that had always been with him; and they that came to him to *Ziklag*, a little before he was made King of *Judah*; and they that came to him to *Hebron*, after he was made King of all *Israel*: All whose Memories were fit to be preserved. But here, in this Book, the Divine Writer intended only to mention the most excellent Heroes, who were always with him in his Wars: And for whose sake he composed the precedent Song of Praises to God.

*The Tachmonite that sat in the Seat,]* Or, as it is translated in the Margin, *Josheb-boshebat the Tachmonite*: For so he is called in *1 Chron. xi. 11. Ishobeam*; which may well be thought the same Name abbreviated. He *sat in the seat* (as we translate it here) in the Council of War; next to *Joab*: being, it is thought, his Lieutenant-General. For that he was one of the *Sanhedrin*, who sat in the Seat of Judgment, as some would have it, is not probable: Though it is likely these were Men of great Wisdom, as well as Valour: And this Man being called a *Chachmonite*, *Abarbinel* thinks it was because he was a Man of Learning, being given to Study as well as Fighting: For in *Hebrew* the Word *Chacham* signifies a wise Man: As this was, no question, in Military Affairs, if not in Affairs of State, and other sorts of Wisdom.

*Chief among the Captains,]* The principal Commander, as I said, under *Joab*. Who is not here mentioned, though he was a great Man, inferior to none of these: But had stained himself by the base Murder of two great Persons, *Abner* and *Amasa*. Which some take to be the Reason, why he had not the Honour to be put into the Number of those Worthies who served *David*.

*(The same was Adino the Ezrite)]* It is thought he had two Names, and was of the Family of the *Ezrites*: Though *Abarbinel* will have his Name to have been *Adinobaezri*.

*He lift up his Spear]* These Words are supplied out of *1 Chron. xi. 11.*

*Against eight hundred, whom he slew at one time.]* In that Place of the *Chronicles* it is said he killed three Hundred: That is, after the Slaughter he made in one Battle, of eight Hundred; but killed in another (as *Kimchi* understands it) three Hundred.

Ver. 9. *And after him was Eleazar the Son of Dodo the Abothite, one of the three mighty men with David,]* He was a *Benjamite*, for *Aboab* was one of his Sons, *1 Chron. viii. 4.*

*When they defied the Philistines]* As *Goliath* had done the *Israelites*, *1 Sam. xvii. 1.*

*That were there gathered together to battle,]* In *Pasdammin*, as we read, *1 Chron. xi. 17.* which in the same with *Ephes-dammim*, *1 Sam. xvii. 1.*

*And the Men of Israel were gone away.]* Fled from before the *Philistines*, as it is explained *1 Chron. xi. 13.*

Ver. 10. *He arose, and smote the Philistines until his hand was weary,]* With the Slaughter that he made.

*And his hand clave unto his Sword:]* Being all besmeared with Blood; which drying by the Heat of it, made the Sword cleave to his Hand.

*And*



And the LORD wrought a great Victory that day;] Like that of *Shamgar*, Judges iii. ult. and of *Samson*, xv. 13. where I have shewn these are not incredible Stories; God inspiring Men with wonderful Courage, and striking a Terror into their Enemies. There were Men in ancient Times of prodigious Strength, mentioned by *Pliny*, Lib. 7. Nat. Histor. Cap. 20.

And the People returned after him only to spoil.] They that fled rallied again, when they saw the Wonders he did: And followed after him, not to fight, but only to partake of the Spoil.

Ver. 11. And after him was *Shammah* the Son of *Agee* the *Hararite*.] Who is not expressly mentioned in the Book of the *Chronicles*; but plainly implied to be engaged in this great Action. For it is said, 1 Chron. xi. 14. that they set themselves, &c. that is, *Shammah* and *Eleazar*: who joined in this Enterprize. But this Place in *Samuel* teaches us, that *Shammah* the Son of *Agee* had the chief hand in it: And therefore it is ascribed to him.

And the Philistines were gathered together into a troop,] Or, as we translate it in the Margin, for Forage. For so *Rabag* interprets the Hebrew Word *Chajja* (which *Kimchi* takes to be a City) that they came to get some Sustenance out of the Field.

Where was a piece of ground full of Lentiles:] In the *Chronicles* it is, full of Barley. In which there is no Difficulty, one Part of the Field being sown with *Lentiles*, and the other Part with *Barley*.

And the People fled from the Philistines.] Fearing to defend the Place.

Ver. 12. But he stood in the midst of the ground and defended it, and slew the Philistines:] So that they could neither burn the Corn, nor carry it away, nor tread it down.

And the LORD wrought a great Victory.] By his Hand: Who was one of the three most mighty Men, though not particularly named in the Book of the *Chronicles*. It being the manner of the Scripture, as the *Jews* observe, to propound that briefly in one Place, which hath been at large explained in another: As this Action of *Shammah* is here in this Book.

Ver. 13. And three of the thirty chief] Or, as it is in the Margin, three Captains over the thirty. Not the three before-mentioned, but the three that follow: Who were not so great as the first three; but yet greater than any of the Thirty whom they commanded.

Went down, and came to David in the Harvest-time,] Or rather, as the Hebrew Words are, at Harvest. That is, saith *Abarbinel*, the Philistines came to destroy the Fruits of the Earth, that they might famish the *Israelites*: Whereupon *David* raised an Army to protect and defend them in reaping of their Harvest, when they went about it.

Unto the Cave of *Adullam*,] A Place where he had hid himself under the Persecution of *Saul*, 1 Sam. xxii. 1. and where he now fortified himself against the Philistines: Who in the Beginning of his Reign came with great Forces against him. For it is plain from 1 Chron. xi. 15. that there was a Rock, or Stronghold there.

And the Troop of the Philistines pitched in the Valley of *Rephaim*.] See 2 Sam. v. 17, 18.

Ver. 14. And David was then in the Hold,] As in the Place above-mentioned; near *Adullam*, 1 Sam. xxii. 4.

And the Garison of the Philistines was then in *Bethlehem*.] They had possessed themselves of this Place, and put a Garison into it.

Ver. 15. And David longed, and said, O that one would give me drink of the Waters of *Bethlehem* which are by the gate.] The Weather being very hot (as it used to be in Harvest-time) *David* was very thirsty, and said to some about him, how glad he should be of a Draught of the Waters of *Bethlehem*: Where he was born, and had lived a long time; and therefore had been accustomed to them, and knew how very pleasant and refreshing they were. But he did not speak this, as *Abarbinel* observes, to the end that any Men should venture their Lives, to fetch him some of this Water.

Ver. 16. And the three mighty Men brake through the Host of the Philistines, and drew Water out of the Well of *Bethlehem*, that was by the Gate, and brought it to David:] This they did without *David*'s knowledge; and the fore-named Author observes three wonderful Things in this Action. First, That three Men could break through the whole Host of the Philistines: And when they had so done, durst stay to draw Water out of the Well: And then carry it away with a high Hand, through the same Host, and bring it to *David*. To which he might have added a fourth Thing, that they attempted this at the very Gate of *Bethlehem*: Where, no doubt, the Garison of the Philistines kept the strongest Guard.

Nevertheless he would not drink thereof, but poured it out unto the LORD.] Not in that Place, where it was brought to him: But kept it (as *Abarbinel* thinks) till he had Opportunity to go to the Altar, and there poured it out unto God. Some fancy that now was the Feast of *Tabernacles*, when they used to draw Water, and pour it out: And *David* made use of this for that purpose. See 1 Sam. vii. 6. There are mystical Senses which the *Jews* please themselves withal, about this Water, with which I shall not trouble the Reader.

Ver. 17. And he said, Be it far from me, O LORD, that I should do this: is not this the Blood of the Men that went in jeopardy of their Lives? therefore he would not drink it.] He looked upon it no longer as Water, but as the Blood of those Men who fetched it with the Peril of their Lives: And the Blood of every thing belonged to the LORD; and was proper to be offered unto him. Some carry this so far to another Sense, that they imagine *David* hereby shewed, it was not material Water he longed for; but the MESSIAH, who had the Water of Life. Who he knew should be born at *Bethlehem*: Which the Philistines therefore should not be able to destroy.

These things did these three mighty Men,] They all joined in this hazardous Exploit: But now follows what they did singly.

Ver. 18. And *Abishai* the Brother of *Joab*, the Son of *Zeruiah*, was chief among three:] The chief of those three mighty Men before-mentioned. See 1 Chron. xi. 20.

And he lift up his Spear against three hundred, and slew them, and had the name among three.]

That



That is, was most eminent and famous of those three.

Ver. 19. *Was he not most honourable of them? therefore he was their Captain:]* That is, no doubt he was worthy to be the Leader of them.

Ver. 20. *And Benajab the Son of Jehoiaza, the Son of a valiant Man of Rabzeel,]* He was descended from valiant Ancestors; whom he far excelled. *Rabzeel* was in the Tribe of *Judah*, *Josh. xv. 21.*

*Who had done many Acts,]* As *Abishai* also had done (for he succoured *David* when a Giant had like to have killed him) but their greatest Acts only are here mentioned.

*He slew two Lion-like Men of Moab:]* The Hebrew Word *Ariel*, signifies a *Lion of God*, that is, a great Lion. And it was the Name among the *Moabites* for a very valiant Man; who at this day among the *Arabians* is called *Affedollabi*, a Lion of God, as *Bochartus* hath observed out of a great many Authors in his *Hieroicoicon*, P. 1. L. 3. Cap. 1.

*He went down also and slew a Lion in the midst of a pit, in time of Snow.]* This Action was the greater, because in the time of Snow Lions are fiercer for want of Prey, and are then also fullest of Heat and Vigour. But it is not likely that *Benajab* went to encounter this Lion merely to shew his Bravery; but, as some think, this was a Lion that had done much Mischief to the Country: Which moved him to expose himself to this Combat with it. But *Bochartus* doth not think this likely; for he needed not have hazarded his Life, but have called others unto his Assistance to destroy this ravenous Beast. He thinks therefore that in a deep Snow, the Lion took shelter in a *Cave* (for so the Word we translate *Pit* sometimes signifies) and that *Benajab* being abroad in that snowy Season, came into the same Place, to defend himself from the Severity of the Weather: Where he was necessitated to enter into a Combat with the Lion; whom he found there, and came with open Mouth to devour him: He compares him to *Alexander* the Great, upon whom a Lion of great Bigness running, he gave him such a Wound as killed him. So did *Lyfimachus* with another. See *Hieroz. P. 1. Lib. 3. Cap. 5.* *Abarbinel* observes three great Things in this Action. *First*, That he slew a Lion, which is the fiercest of all wild Beasts. *Secondly*, He slew him in a Pit, where he could not turn himself as he pleased. And *Thirdly*, In a Time of Snow, when his Hands and Feet were cold and numb; which hindered their vital Operations.

Ver. 21. *And he slew an Egyptian, a goodly Man:]* A Person of great Stature. See 1 *Chron. xi. 23.*

*And the Egyptian had a Spear in his hand;]* See there.

*And he went down with a Staff,]* Such as Men used to walk with.

*And plucked the Spear out of the Egyptian's Hand, and slew him with his own Spear.]* This shews him to have been both a fearless Person, and of great Skill and Dexterity, in managing a Combat either with Man or Beast.

Ver. 22. *These things did Benajab the Son of Jehoiaza, and had the name among the three mighty Men.]* Who the third was is not said plainly, either here, or in the Book of the *Chronicles*.

*Abarbinel* thinks he might possibly join with the other two, but did no mighty Matter by himself; and so is not mentioned. But perhaps *Adina*, the Son of *Shiza*, might be the third: Because it is said, 1 *Chron. xi. 42.* that he was a *Captain of the Reubenites, and thirty with him.* Which seems to signify that he was above the Thirty, as *Abishai* and *Benajab* were.

Ver. 23. *He was more honourable than the thirty, but he attained not to the first three:]* Was not comparable to *Abino*, and *Eleazar*, and *Shammab*: Who were like Lions; as these were like Lions Whelps, as *Strigelius* glosses.

*And David set him over his Guard,]* See Chapter viii. 18.

Ver. 24. *And Asabel the Brother of Joab was one of the thirty;]* Now follow the Names of Thirty valiant Men, but not equal to the Worthies before-named. *Asabel* seems to have been the Chief of the Thirty: And so some translate the Words, *he was above the Thirty*; and so might be the last of the three of the second Order of Worthies.

*Elbanan the Son of Dodo of Bethlehem,]* Concerning whom we find nothing recorded but this, That he was born and bred (it is likely) in the same Place with *David*.

Ver. 25. *Shammab the Harodite, Elik the Anchorite,]* The first of these is called *Shammoth* in 1 *Chron. xi. 27.* and he is said to be an *Harodite*. Which is a very small Variation, *Resb* being put in the place of *Daleth*, as is very common in Scripture, according to the various Pronunciation of Words in divers Parts of the Country. There is a greater Difference in the Name that follows, and in many others: It being common, as *Abarbinel* observes, for Men to have two Names. But it is plain the same Persons are here mentioned, that are in the Book of *Chronicles*: Though there (as he notes) are more added. For the Author of that Book reckons up all the chief Commanders in the Army; so that, though they were not heroical Persons in themselves, yet being great Commanders over others, *Ezra* thought fit to mention them. But here, in the Book of *Samuel*, the Prophet only numbers those that were of themselves great Heroes, not minding the chief Commanders in the Army, who were not so.

Ver. 26. *Helez the Paltite, Ira the Son of Iketh the Tekoite,]* None of the memorable Acts of these, or of the following Worthies, are recorded; therefore all that I can say of them is this: That when God intended to raise a King to a great Height, as he did *David*, he raised up the Spirits of several great Men to assist him. Thus he did with *Alexander* the Great, who had *Clitus*, *Parmenio*, *Antigonus*, *Ptolemæus*, *Seleucus*, *Craterus*, and other brave Men to accompany him in all his Enterprizes: But *David* (it may be truly observed) in a less Kingdom, had far more.

Ver. 27. *Abiezer the Anethothite, Mebunnai the Hushathite,*

Ver. 28. *Zalmon the Aholabite, Maharai the Netophathite,*

Ver. 29. *Helch the Son of Baanah a Netophathite, Ittai the Son of Ibai out of Gibeah of the Children of Benjamin,*

Ver. 30.



Ver. 30. *Benajab the Pirathonite, Hiddai of the Brooks of Gaash,*

Ver. 31. *Abi-albon the Arbatbite, Azmaweth the Barbumite,*

Ver. 32. *Eliabba the Shaabonite; of the Sons of Joshen, Jonathan.*

Ver. 33. *Shammah the Hararite, Abiam the Son of Sharab the Hararite,*

Ver. 34. *Eliphelet the Son of Abashbai, the Son of the Maachathite, Eliam the Son of Abitophel, the Gileonite,*

Ver. 35. *Hezrai the Carmelite, Paarai the Arbite.*

Ver. 36. *Igal the Son of Nathan of Zobab, Bani the Gadite,*

Ver. 37. *Zelek the Ammonite, Nabarai the Beerothbite, Armour-bearer to Joab the Son of Zeruiab,*

Ver. 38. *Ira an Itbrite, Gareb an Itbrite,*

Ver. 39. *Uriah the Hittite: thirty and seven it all.]* Here are only thirty and six named; therefore Joab is supposed, by *Abarbinel*, to be the other: Who was the Head of them all.

## CHAP. XXIV.

Verse 1. **A**ND again the Anger of the LORD was kindled against Israel,] Because they had followed *Absalom*, says *Abarbinel*, and afterwards *Sheba* the Son of *Bickri*: For which they had not been yet sufficiently punished. But it is more likely, it was for their Luxury, now that Plenty was restored to them, after the fore Famine that fell upon them upon the score of the *Gibeonites*.

*And he moved David against them,]* Or, *David was moved*; that is, by *Satan*, as it is expounded in the first Book of the *Chronicles*, xxi. 1. But *Abarbinel* thinks it is as if he had said, the Anger of the LORD which was kindled against Israel, moved David, &c. That is, the same Sin which made God angry with Israel, was the Cause that David was seduced in this Thing, that they might be punished.

*To say, Go number Israel and Judah.]* To give Command that an Account should be taken of the Number of all the People.

Ver. 2. *For the King said to Joab the Captain of the Host]* Accordingly it no sooner came into his Heart, but he gave Orders about it to the principal Commander of his Army.

*Which was with him,]* Who always, when they were in War, attended on him.

*Go now through all the Tribes of Israel, from Dan even to Beer-sheba,]* From one End of the Country to the other. For *Dan* (as I have before observed) was the utmost Bounds of it in the North, as *Beer-sheba* was in the South.

*And number ye the People, that I may know the Number of the People.]* Joab was to take proper Officers with him, to assist him in this Business: So that there might be an exact Account given. See ver. 4.

Ver. 3. *And Joab said unto the King, Now the LORD thy God add unto the People (how many soever they be) an hundred fold, and that the Eyes of my Lord the King may see it:]* It appears by this, that Joab was a great Courtier, as well as a great Captain: Who knew how to divert

the King from what he did not like; if good Words and Wishes would have done it.

*But why doth my Lord the King delight in this thing?]* For which he thought there was no Reason; and as it would be troublesome and chargeable, so there might be much Danger in it; as he expresses it in 1 *Chron.* xxi. 3.

Ver. 4. *Notwithstanding the King's word prevailed against Joab, and against the Captains of the Host:]* Who joined, it seems, with Joab to divert the King from this Purpose: In which he was fixed and immoveable.

*And Joab and the Captains of the Host went out from the Presence of the King, to number the People of Israel.]* It is most likely that their inferior Officers went with the Captains; to expedite the Business.

Ver. 5. *And they passed over Jordan,]* They went first into the Eastern Part of the Country; and so by the Northern Coasts to the West; and then to the South.

*And pitched in Arzer,]* These Words seem to import, that they pitched their Tents in the Field; and thither summoned the neighbouring Towns to come in to them: Which was very troublesome, and at last proved grievous; as appears by the Book of *Chronicles*.

*On the right side of the City, that lieth in the midst of the river of Gad, and towards Fazer.]* We nowhere read of such a River: Which in the Margin is translated the *Valley of Gad*. But *Fazer* was a Town in that Tribe, *Numb.* xxxii. 35.

Ver. 6. *And they came to Gilead, and to the Land of Tathtimbodshi;]* It is in vain to seek after this Land; which is not mentioned in the Book of *Joshua*, but it is likely was near to *Gilead*; and had been lately recovered, some think, from other People, and now inhabited by the *Israelites*. See the Margin of our Bibles.

*And they came to Dan-jaan, and about to Zidon.]* Not to the City of *Zidon*, for that was not in their power; but to the Coast about it.

Ver. 7. *And came to the Strong-hold of Tyre,]* To the Territory near it.

*And to all the Cities of the Hivites, and Canaanites:]* Who lived in those North-West Parts of the Country.

*And they went out to the South of Judah,]* Having taken account of all the Towns upon the Sea-Coast (which was in the West) they turned to the South, into the Tribe of *Judah*.

*Even to Beer-sheba.]* Which was in the utmost Limits of the Country on that Side.

Ver. 8. *So when they had gone through all the Land,]* But not numbered all the People: For the Work grew so tedious, that they omitted *Levi*, and *Benjamin*; as we read, 1 *Chron.* xxi. 6.

*They came to Jerusalem at the end of nine months and twenty days.]* They could not well dispatch it in less Time; an Account being to be taken of every City and Village in the whole Country.

Ver. 9. *And Joab gave up the number of the People unto the King:]* All the Officers brought in their particular Sums to Joab: Who cast them up, and they amounted in all to the Number following.

*And*



*And there were in Israel eight hundred thousand valiant Men that drew the Sword;]* They did not, it seems, reckon Women, and Children, and old Men; nor such as were not fit for War.

*And the Men of Judah were five hundred thousand Men.]* There is a great Difference between this Account and that in the *Chronicles*. For there (1 *Chron.* xxi. 5.) the Men of *Israel* are said to be three hundred Thousand more than are here mentioned; and, on the contrary, the Men of *Judah* are said to be thirty Thousand less. Of the former of which there is a plain Account, that in this Book the standing Legions are not numbred: Which were very well known, they serving under twelve Commanders so many Months, 1 *Chron.* xxvii. 1, &c. But in the Book of the *Chronicles* all these are taken into the Number there mentioned. For the *Jews* observe in *Halicoth Olam*, that there being twenty-four Thousand who waited every Month (which makes in all two Hundred eighty-eight Thousand) allowing a Thousand Officers (as we cannot well allow less) to every twenty-four Thousand, there will be the twelve Thousand wanting; which added to the two Hundred eighty-eight thousand, make just three Hundred Thousand: Which added to the eight Hundred Thousand here mentioned, make up the eleven Hundred Thousand mentioned in the *Chronicles*. The like Account *Bochartus* gives of the next Difficulty, that if twenty-four Thousand Legionary Soldiers be added of the Tribe of *Judah* to the four Hundred and seventy Thousand, it comes near to five Hundred Thousand, *Hieroz. Pars I. Lib. 2. Cap. 38.* But others think there is no need of this; it being usual in Scripture to mention a round Sum; either of Men or of Years, when some were wanting. So that though there were no more than four Hundred and Seventy Thousand, yet they might be said to be five Hundred Thousand. Or, as they say in *Halicoth Olam*, the Tribe of *Benjamin* (who were Neighbours to *Judah*) are reckoned here in this Book, who were omitted in the *Chronicles*. 1 *Chron.* xxi. 6.

Ver. 10. *And David's Heart smote him, after that he had numbred the People:]* When he ordered it, he was possessed with other Thoughts; and did not seriously reflect upon what he had done, till God touched his Heart with a Sense of his Guilt after the Sin was committed.

*And David said unto the LORD, I have sinned greatly, in that I have done:]* It is made a great Doubt by Interpreters what this Sin was, and wherein the Heinousness of it consisted. The common Opinion is, That as there was something of Vanity and Ostentation in him, when he had a mind to know how populous his Country was, so it quite made him forget the half Shekel that was due upon such Occasions, by the Appointment of the Law, *Exod.* xxx. 12. And this was no small Sin, not to pay God his Dues, in such Plenty and Abundance as they now enjoyed. But if that was the Meaning of *Moses*, it cannot well be thought that *David* was either ignorant or unmindful of it, having made the Law his Study day and night. *Bertram* therefore thinks his Fault was, that he numbred those who were under twenty Years old,

contrary to the Order in the Law, *Exod.* xxx. 14. xxxviii. 26, &c. But I see no Foundation for this; but rather the quite contrary is asserted in the Book of the *Chronicles*. Therefore Dr. *Lightfoot* fancies *David* had a covetous Project in his Mind, to lay a Capitation-Tax (as we now speak) upon every Poll throughout the Kingdom. But such Conjectures being without ground, some reject all other Interpretations, and rely upon this; that the numbering of the People was a thing contrary to the Fundamental Promise made by God to *Abraham*, that his Seed should increase so, as to be like the Stars for Multitude: Which is given as a Reason why the Number of the People was not taken exactly, 1 *Chron.* xxvii. 23. and seems to imply, that there was a general Notion received among the *Jews*, that since God promised to increase them beyond Number, none ought to go about to take the Number of them, for this might seem to favour of Infidelity, and Mistrust of God's Promise. But those Words on which this Reason relies (in 1 *Chron.* xxvii. 23.) only give a Reason why *David* did not number all from twenty Years old, and under: Which if he had gone about to do (*i. e.* reckon the whole Nation) it might have seemed to cross the Promise: But since it was only those who were above twenty years old, whom he ordered to be numbred, I cannot look upon it as a Contempt or Mistrust of God's Word: But, after all, I think we must content our selves with what *Rablag* says (whom *Abarbinel* after the Examination of other Opinions follows) that *David* being the Anointed of the LORD, and the sweet Singer of *Israel*, made Flesh his Arm, and confided in the Number of his People: In which such a King as he should not have placed his Confidence, but in the LORD his God whom none can resist, and can save by few as well as by many. Unto which *Abarbinel* adds, that the Greatness of a Sin is not always to be measured by the Sin it self, but by the Quality and Dignity of him that committeth it: As *Moses* and *Aaron* were punish'd for a small Sin, which excluded them from the good Land: Which was not proportionable to the Sin, but to the Condition of the Offenders, who should have given a better Example to the People. Thus he.

*And now I beseech thee, O LORD, take away the Iniquity of thy Servant, for I have done very foolishly.]* Since he condemned himself, and begg'd pardon, he hoped he might escape the Punishment which he deserved. But he was deceived; because not only he, but his People had offended, and upon other accounts deserved to be punished.

Ver. 11. *For when David was up in the Morning, the Word of the LORD came unto the Prophet Gad, David's Seer, saying,]* The Words seem to import that *David* was not touched in Conscience, 'till *Gad* came and told him how angry God was with him. He is called *David's Seer*; because he was his Domestic Prophet, (who is the same with a *Seer*, 1 *Sam.* ix. 9.) with whom he was wont to advise in all difficult Cases, 1 *Sam.* xxii. 5. and kept a Record of his memorable Acts, 1 *Chron.* xxix. 29.



Ver. 12. *Go, and say unto David, Thus saith the LORD, I offer thee three things; choose one of them, that I may do it unto thee.*] Now it had been a proper Time, as *Abarbinel* observes, for *David* to have fallen down before God, and deprecated his Displeasure in those Words, ver. 10. *I have sinned greatly in what I have done, &c.* But he saw the Sentence was passed upon him absolutely; and therefore he submits unto it.

Ver. 13. *So Gad came and told him,*] That he was sent by God with a Message to him.

*And said unto him, Shall seven Years of Famine come unto thee in thy Land?*] In the Book of the *Chronicles* only three Years of Famine are propounded; which is far more likely than seven: For it better agrees with the three Months Flight before his Enemies, and the three Days Pestilence. And therefore not only *Grotius*, but *Bochartus* also here read *three years*, following the LXX, who have ἐν τριῶν, whom most of the Ancients follow, as *Bochartus* observes in his *Hierozaicon*, P. 1. Lib. 2. Cap. 38. Yet *Josephus* here hath seven Years: And many think that *Gad* at first propounded seven Years; but afterwards at *David's* Prayer shortened them to three. Other Solutions are in every Interpreter, who adhere to this reading of seven Years. See *Buxtorf's Vindic. Verit. Hebr.* P. 2. Cap. 2. and Cap. 8. p. 523.

*Or wilt thou flee three Months before thine Enemies while they pursue thee? or that there be three Days Pestilence in the Land?*] These were the three sore Judgments wherewith God commonly afflicted them for their Sins; who now was so gracious, as to give him his Choice which of them he would suffer: For one of them was peremptorily resolved.

*Now advise, and see what answer I shall return to him that sent me.*] There seems to be no great need to take Time to consider which of these to choose; the last being the shortest, and an immediate Stroke from the Hand of God, who is full of tender Mercy and Compassion. But in this *Gad* expresses the Clemency of God, who would not hastily inflict any Punishment upon him.

Ver. 14. *And David said unto Gad, I am in a great strait: let us now fall into the Hand of the LORD (for his Mercies are great) and let me not fall into the Hand of Man.*] He seems to leave it to God to send either Famine or Pestilence (for both come from God's Hand) and desires only that Men might not be the Instruments of his Punishment. For as they are wont to be cruel, so they make no Distinction between good and bad, but destroy all alike. This is admirably expressed by the Son of *Sirach* in *Ecclus.* ii. 17, 18. *They that fear the LORD will prepare their Heart, and humble their Souls in his sight, saying; We will fall into the Hands of the LORD, and not into the Hands of Men; for as his Majesty is, so is his Mercy.*

Ver. 15. *So the LORD sent a Pestilence upon Israel,*] The Symptoms of which were very diverse, if we may believe *Josephus*. For some, he saith, died suddenly in intolerable Pain: Others wasted away and left nothing to be buried but Skin and Bones, their Bodies being consumed by the Disease: Others were suddenly choaked, or struck blind, &c.

*From the Morning.*] From that Time when *Gad* delivered the Message, and *David* made his Choice; which was in the Morning, as we read before, ver. 11.

*Even to the time appointed:*] There are those who by *the time appointed* understand to the End of three Days mentioned by *Gad*, as the Time appointed by the LORD for the Continuance of this Plague. But this is quite contrary to what follows, that God repented him of the Evil; and commanded the Angel that smote the People to stay his Hand. Therefore the LXX translate it better, ἕως ὥρας ἀρίστης, 'till Dinner-time: And so *Procopius Gazæus*. Certain it is, that *Moed* signifies some part of that Day when the Plague began: And that must be either Noon, or the Evening. But, as *Bochartus* hath observed, the Morning and Evening are the Parts of the Day most opposite in Scripture (of which he gives many Instances) and therefore so he here understands it, that it continued from Morning to the Evening. For *Moed* properly signifies an Assembly: And therefore the *Time Moed* he thinks is the Time when the People met for Evening Prayer; about the Ninth Hour of the Day. Which Prayer, before the building of the Temple, was made at the Tabernacle, or in their Synagogues. And therefore the Tabernacle is frequently called *Obel Moed*: And the Synagogues are called in *Psal.* lxxiv. 18. *Moade El*. So that he makes account this Pestilence lasted no more than Nine Hours: Which was the eighth Part of three Days.

*And there died of the People from Dan to Beer-sheba, seventy thousand Men.*] If it had raged three Days, and in every Nine Hours had killed so many, above the third part of those who had been numbred, would have died by this Plague. But, as *Kimchi* here observes, by the great Mercy of God, the Time was contracted. It is a frivolous Observation of some of the *Jews*, that because it is not said seventy Thousand *Anaschim*, but only *Isch*, which commonly signifies a single Person, that *Abisbai* died of this Plague who was worth seventy Thousand of the common People. Nor doth the Observation of *Grotius* seem to be altogether true; who in his second Book, *De Jure Belli & Pacis*, Cap. 21. Sect. 17. saith, *Hæc pœna erat non populi, sed Davidis*; this was the Punishment not of the People, but of *David*: Quoting that Saying of an ancient Christian Writer (*Quest. ad Orthodoxos*) Πικροτάτη τιμωρία τῶν ἡμαρτανότων βασιλέων, ἢ τιμωρία τῷ λαῷ, the bitterest Punishment of delinquent Kings, is that which is inflicted upon their People. But it is certain the People here had also offended: For it is said in the very Beginning of this Chapter, that God was angry with *Israel*. And as for what *David* saith, ver. 17. *These Sheep what have they done?* it is spoken out of his great Affection to them; whose Offences he did not know so well as his own: And therefore desired they might be spared, and he punished.

Ver. 16. *And when the Angel stretched out his Hand upon Jerusalem to destroy it, the LORD repented him of the evil, and said unto the Angel that destroyed the People, It is enough; stay now thine Hand.*] God did not change his Mind, but only



ly revoked that which he had decreed upon a certain Condition; which was, that three Days Pestilence should come upon the Country, unless *David* and the People repented; which he seeing they did, (1 *Chron.* xxi. 16.) he shortned the Time, and would not let the Angel proceed above an eighth Part of it.

Ver. 17. *And David spake unto the LORD, when he saw the Angel that smote the People, and said, Lo, I have sinned, and I have done wickedly: but, these Sheep, what have they done?*] Like a good Man he reflected only on his own Sin, in numbring the People; but did not think of theirs in deposing him lately, and setting up *Ab-salom* (which *Theodoret*, *Procopius Gazæus*, and others think was the Crime for which they were punished) which he had forgiven, but God thought fit to punish; who by their Silence may be thought to have approved the Fact of *David*. And besides, the Loss of so many People was a Punishment of the King himself, as was before observed.

*Let thy Hand, I pray thee, be against me, and against my Father's House.*] That is, against his Kindred, who did not dissuade him from the Vanity of numbering the People, but perhaps encouraged him in it.

Ver. 18. *And Gad came that day to David, and said unto him,*] By the express Command of the LORD, 1 *Chron.* xxi. 18, 19.

*Go up, rear an Altar to the LORD in the Threshing-floor of Araunah the Jebusite.*] This Threshing-floor was on the Mount *Moriah*; the Place where *Abraham* offered up his Son; and where the Temple was built by *Solomon*. See 2 *Chron.* iii. 1. Of which *Eupolemus*, an Heathen Writer, takes notice, saying, that God shewed *David* by an Angel the Place where the Temple should be built. See *Eusebius's Præpar. Evang. Lib. 9. Cap. 30.* The Jews will have it, that it was here *Abel* and *Cain* offer'd their Sacrifices, (see *Selden Lib. 3. de Synedr. p. 199*, and 431.) Nay, that it was the Place where *Adam* was created; according to a Saying of their Doctors, *Adam was created out of the Place of his Expiation.* See *G. Vorstius upon Pirke Eliezer, p. 163.*

Ver. 19. *And David, according to the saying of Gad, went up as the LORD commanded.*] That is, he went the next Moment after he received the Command.

Ver. 20. *And Araunah looked, and saw the King and his Servants coming on towards him; and Araunah went out, and bowed himself before the King, on his Face upon the Ground.*] As the Manner was, and still is, in the Eastern Countries.

Ver. 21. *And Araunah said, Wherefore is my Lord the King come up unto thy Servant?*] It may be he thought it too great an Honour; and therefore desired to know the Meaning of it.

*And David said, To buy the Threshing-floor of thee, to build an Altar unto the LORD, that the Plague may be stayed from the People.*] By offering a Sacrifice to appease his Anger; as he himself had ordered, 1 *Chron.* xxi. 26, 27.

Ver. 22. *And Araunah said unto David, Let my Lord the King take and offer up what seemeth good unto him: Behold, here be Oxen for Burnt-sacrifices, and threshing Instruments, and other Instruments of*

*the Oxen for Wood.*] For when the Angel appeared there, he was threshing Wheat, which he offered likewise to *David* for a Meat-offering, 1 *Chron.* xxi. 20, 23. And the Instruments of the Oxen were their Yokes, and such as they drew after them to press forth the Corn.

Ver. 23. *All these things did Araunah, as a King, give unto the King:*] The Words in the Hebrew are, *these things gave Araunah the King unto the King.* From whence some infer, that before the taking of *Jerusalem* he was the King of the *Jebusites*; or, a Man of the greatest Authority among them, like a King; or was descended from the Blood Royal of the *Jebusites*, as Dr. *Lightfoot* expresses it. But neither the Greek, nor the Syriack, nor the Arabick Copies have the word *King*: Nor was it in many of the *Vulgar* till *Sixtus's* Correction; nor in the *Chaldee Paraphrast* in the Time of *Kimchi*, who cites it thus; *Araunah gave to the King what the King asked of him.* And, as *Bochartus* observes, *Araunah* (or *Ornan*) being mentioned fourteen times in the Holy Books, it is a wonder he should not be stiled a King, but only here. *Hieroz. P. 1. L. 1. Cap. 38.* But it is likely he was a very rich Man, as *Josephus* reports; whom the King spared when he took the Fort of *Zion*: Either because he was a Lover of the *Israelites*; or had done some good Office unto *David*.

*And Araunah said unto the King, The LORD thy God accept thee.*] He thought himself abundantly satisfied, if God pleased to grant *David's* Request; which he beseeched him to do: for no doubt he was a Profelyte, earnestly desiring the Happiness of the Nation, into which he was incorporated.

Ver. 24. *And the King said unto Araunah, Nay, but I will surely buy it of thee at a Price: neither will I offer Burnt-offerings unto the LORD my God of that which cost me nothing.*] Whence is that of *Solomon*, *Prov. iii. 9. Honour the LORD with thy Substance*; which the Greek thus translates, *τίμα τὸν Κύριον ἀπὸ τῶν δικαίων πόνων.* Honour the LORD out of thy honest Labours, that is, out of that which thou hast acquired by thy honest Industry.

*So David bought the Threshing-floor, and the Oxen, for fifty Shekels of Silver.*] In the *Chronicles* we read, according to our Translation, that he gave him six hundred Shekels of Gold by weight; which *Bochartus* thus reconciles; that in one Place he speaks of Shekels of Gold, and in the other of Shekels of Silver. Whose Proportion is Twelve-fold; so that fifty Shekels of Gold are in Value as much as six hundred Shekels of Silver. He quotes a Place out of *Plato* in his *Hipparchus*, which proves that Gold and Silver held this Proportion. And then he thus translates this Place in *Samuel*, he bought the Floor and the Oxen *Beceseeph* for Money, viz. for fifty Golden Shekels. So the word *Ceseeph* often signifies Money in general, of whatsoever Metal it be; as appears from this very History, wherein *David* tells *Ornan* that he will buy the Field of him, *Beceseeph Malo*, which we translate, *At its full Price*, 1 *Chron.* xxi. 24. And then it follows, he gave *Ornan* *Shikle Zabav*, Shekels of Gold, *Mishkall Sheph Meoth*, in Value six hundred *Vulgar*, or Silver Shekels. See *Hierozoi-*

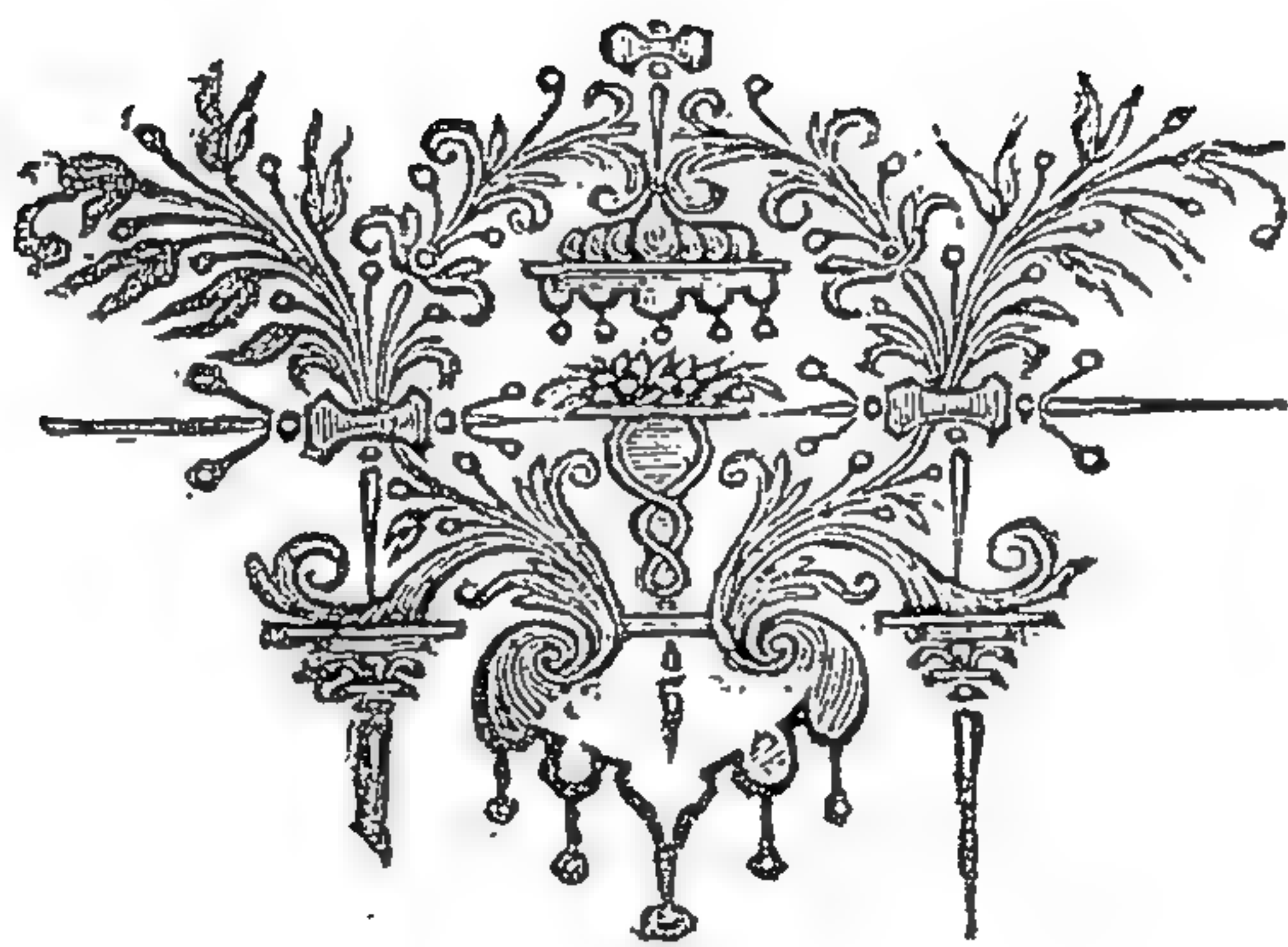


con, P. 1. L. 2. Cap. 38. where the word *Mishkall* he acknowledges commonly signifies *Weight*; yet here denotes *Value*: As in the 2d of *Sam.* xii. 30. The Design of *Ezra* being to shew that the fifty Shekels he gave for the Floor and Oxen, were not Silver (which were most common) but Shekels of Gold; every one of which was worth Twelve of Silver: So that those fifty Shekels were equivalent to six hundred Silver ones.

But there is a shorter Way of solving this Difficulty, by supposing, that for the Threshing-Floor and the Oxen he gave only fifty Shekels of Silver: But all the Ground about it (out of which, the Courts of God's House were afterwards made) cost him six hundred Shekels of Gold.

Ver. 25. *And David built there an Altar unto the LORD, and offered Burnt-offerings, and Peace-offerings.*] Burnt-offerings were Prayers to God that he would remove this Plague: And Peace-offerings were Acknowledgments of God's Goodness, who had already given *David* Hopes of this Mercy.

*So the LORD was intreated for the Land, and the Plague was stayed from Israel.*] As plainly appeared by God's sending Fire down from Heaven to consume the Sacrifices: And the Angel also, who appeared with a flaming Sword over *Jerusalem*, being commanded to put it up into his Sheath, 1 *Chron.* xxi. 26, 27. From hence *David* concluded God would be more placable in this Place than any other; and therefore took Counsel to build the Temple here.







A  
 COMMENTARY  
 UPON THE  
 FIRST BOOK  
 OF THE  
 KINGS.

**T**HESE two following Books contain the History of the Kings of Israel and Judah, from the Beginning of Solomon's Reign down to the Captivity of Babylon: For the Space of near Six Hundred Years; taking into the Account the History of the two foregoing Books. It is highly probable that they were composed by Ezra, who extracted them out of the publick Records: Which were kept of what passed in that Nation; as we read of the Book of the Acts of Solomon, in this very Book, xi. 41. And frequently, of the Books of the Kings of Israel, and of the Kings of Judah; and of the Book of Jehu, in which was written the Acts of Jehoshaphat, 2 Chron. xx. 34. And Isaiah we read wrote the Acts of Uzziah first and last, 2 Chron. xxvi. 22. Out of which, and such like Books, Ezra composed this brief History. In which there are several things that Heathens themselves have taken Notice of, as Huetius observes in his Demonstratio Evangelica, Prepos. 4. Where he answers the trifling Objections, which

some have made against the Antiquity of these Books.

C H A P. I.

Verse 1. **N**OW David was old and stricken in years;] For he was Seventy Years old, as we learn from 2 Sam. v. 4, 5.

And they covered him with Cloaths, but he got no Heat.] His Blood was so chill'd, that he could not be warm in his Bed: Much less when he was up. Dr. Lightfoot thinks he was struck with a dead Palsy.

Ver. 2. Wherefore his Servants] His Physicians, it is most likely, that attended him.

Said unto him, Let there be sought for my Lord the King] Those are the Words of the Prime Physician, in the Name of the rest.

A young Virgin, and let her stand before the King,] Or minister unto him in the Day-time: For the very Sight of a beautiful Virgin very much excites the Natural Spirits.

And



*And let her cherish him, and let her lie in thy Bosom,]* Become his Wife, and in the Night lie in the same Bed close to him.

*That my Lord the King may get Heat,]* For nothing more effectually procures Heat and healthful Concoction, than the Application of a young Body, even of a Puppy, to the Stomach all night: As *Galen* observes in his Fifth Book of the Power of simple Medicines. For *συμφυλό-τερος, καὶ οἰκειότερος πολὺ*, this Warmth is nearer of kin to us, and more proper than any other that can be invented: As *Victorinus Strigelius* hath taken notice.

Ver. 3. *So they sought for a fair Damsel throughout all the Coasts of Israel, and found Abishag the Shunamite, and brought her to the King,]* She being young, sprightly, and willing to be taken into his Bed: For his other Wives were grown too old to put any Life into him.

Ver. 4. *And the Damsel was very fair,]* Of an amiable Countenance.

*And cherished the King, and ministred to him: but the King knew her not,]* Did not enjoy her as his Wife; but she remain'd still a Virgin: Being his Bedfellow only to keep him warm.

Ver. 5. *Then Adonijah the Son of Haggith exalted himself, saying, I will be King:]* Taking advantage of his Father's Age and Weakness (who he thought could not oppose it) he resolv'd to take possession of the Kingdom: But the Crown, as the Jews fancy, would not fit his Head.

*And he prepared himself Chariots and Horsemen, and fifty Men to run before him,]* Just as *Absalom* had done when he began to conspire against his Father, 2 Sam. xv. 1.

Ver. 6. *And his Father had not displeased him at any time, in saying, why hast thou done so?]* This was one of *David's* great Faults, extraordinary Indulgence unto his Children: Of whom he was so fond, that he seems to have overlooked their Errors, and never to have chidden them for any thing they did amiss. And now in his old Age this Wickedness was more apparent; he growing naturally more remiss, careless and sluggish.

*And he also was a very goodly Man;]* And so the more likely to draw the People after him. For a noble Aspect was always a Qualification for the Royal Authority; as appears by the History of *Saul*, *David*, and *Absalom*.

*And his Mother bare him after Absalom,]* He pretended to the Crown, because *Absalom* being dead, he was next to him in order of Birth. See 2 Sam. iii. 3, 4.

Ver. 7. *And he conferred with Joab the Son of Zeruiah, and with Abiathar the Priest:]* Whom, it is likely, he knew to be two discontented Persons: The former upon the account of *David's* putting *Amasa* in his place; and the other because he saw *Zadok* in greater Favour than himself.

*And they following Adonijah, helped him,]* Furthered him in his Design: As a means to secure themselves with the next Heir.

Ver. 8. *But Zadok the Priest, and Benaiah the Son of Jehoiada, and Nathan the Prophet, and Shimei, and Rei, and the mighty Men which belonged unto David, were not with Adonijah,]* The three first of these are well known to have

been great Favourites of *David*: And therefore *Adonijah* knew would not be for his Turn. The two next, it is likely, were Persons of Note, who were perfectly in *David's* Interest: And *Shimei* possibly may be the Person whom *Solomon* preferred to a great Office, iv. 18. though *Abarbinel* thinks he was *Shimei* who cursed *David*. See upon the next Chapter, ver. 8. the mighty Men here mentioned are those named in 2 Sam. xxiii. and his Guards who had served under *David* so long, and done such mighty Acts in his Reign, and under his Conduct, that *Adonijah* had no hope of drawing them into his Party.

Ver. 9. *And Adonijah slew Sheep, and Oxen, and fat Cattle,]* Of the Hebrew word *Meri*, which we translate fat Cattle, see upon 2 Sam. vi. 13.

*By the Stone of Zobelet which is by Enrogel,]* The Hebrew word *Zobel* signifies a slow Motion, as *Bochart* observes in his *Hierozyicon*, P. 1. Lib. 1. Cap. 9. From whence this Stone had its Name: The Fullers here pressing out the Water, which dropped from the Cloaths that they had washed in this Well, called *Rogel*. *Josephus* saith the King's Gardens lay near this Well: Which, out of him, is also affirmed by *Procopius Gazæus*.

*And called all his Brethren the King's Sons,]* Whose Names are mentioned in 2 Sam. iii. 4, 5. and more largely in 1 Chron. iii. 4, 5, &c.

*And all the Men of Judah the King's Servants,]* Except those before mentioned, ver. 8. and again excepted, ver. 10. But all the rest of the Family of *David*, and the principal Persons of the Tribe of *Judah*, with the High-Priest, and the Captain of the Host being present, there seemed to be nothing wanting to the making of him King; but only his anointing. For this seems to have been a Fœderal Feast; wherein they sware Allegiance to *Adonijah*.

Ver. 10. *But Nathan the Prophet and Benaiah, and the mighty Men, and Solomon his Brother he called not,]* It was a Feast, I suppose, upon a great Sacrifice: Unto which none came, but they who were invited.

Ver. 11. *Wherefore Nathan spake unto Bathsheba the Mother of Solomon, saying, Hast thou not heard that Adonijah the Son of Haggith doth reign,]* It seems they were so bold as to proclaim him King.

*And David our Lord knoweth it not?]* For it was secretly contrived between him, and *Joab*, and the rest: Without the Privy of *David* or of *Bathsheba*.

Ver. 12. *Now therefore come, let me I pray thee give thee Counsel, that thou mayest save thy own Life, and the Life of thy Son Solomon,]* Whom he knew they would endeavour to cut off: As the Person designed by *David* to be his Successor.

Ver. 13. *Go, and get thee in unto King David, and say unto him, Didst not thou my Lord, O King, swear unto thy Handmaid, saying, assuredly Solomon thy Son shall reign after me, and he shall sit upon my Throne. Why then doth Adonijah reign?]* We do not read any where else of this Oath; but no doubt he had solemnly sworn to her, that he would make her Son his Successor: God himself having designed him to that Honour; as appears from 2 Sam. vii. 12. Where God



God promises by *Nathan* to set upon his Throne a Son that should proceed from him. Which plainly signified, none of his Sons already born were to be the Person. But more plainly, 1 *Chron.* xxii. 8, 9, 10, &c. he declares that God told him *Solomon* should reign after him, and build him an House; and thereupon he commanded all the Princes of *Israel* to be assistant to him, *ver.* 17. And see xxviii. 5, 6. All this, I doubt not, was known to *Adonijah*; which made his Crime the greater, in setting himself against the Decree of Heaven: And he himself confesses as much in the next Chapter, *ver.* 15.

*Ver.* 14. *Behold, while thou yet talkest there with the King, I also will come in after thee, and confirm thy Words.*] Which he knew would quicken the King to give speedy Orders about this Matter.

*Ver.* 15. *And Bathsheba went in unto the King, into the Chamber:*] Being the King's Wife, she had the Privilege to come into his Bed-Chamber, without asking Leave, as *Kimchi* observes. Whereas *Nathan* did not appear before the King 'till they told him he was there to wait upon him, *ver.* 23.

*And the King was very old;*] And could not discern who it was that entred into the Chamber.

*And Abishag the Shunamite ministred unto the King.*] And informed him, it is likely, that *Bathsheba* was come into the Room to speak with him.

*Ver.* 16. *And Bathsheba bowed, and did obeisance to the King:*] First bowed her Head, and then her Body: As the manner was even for their Wives, as well as other Persons.

*And the King said, What wouldst thou?*] She had signified, I suppose, to *Abishag*, that she had some Petition to make to him.

*Ver.* 17. *And she said unto him, My Lord, thou swearest by the LORD thy God unto thy Handmaid, saying, Assuredly Solomon thy Son shall reign after me, and he shall sit upon my Throne:*] *David* swore this, as *Abarbinel* thinks, when *Absalom* his eldest Son rebelled against him. And the rather, because *Nathan* had told him (as I observed before) a Child should proceed from him, that should sit upon his Throne: who therefore was then unborn. But all the rest, except *Solomon*, were born before this Promise, and therefore he concluded were none of them designed by God to be his Successors.

*Ver.* 18. *And now behold Adonijah reigneth; and now, my Lord the King thou knowest it not.*] This she saith, that she might not seem to accuse *David* of breaking his Oath: And that she might aggravate the Crime of *Adonijah*, in presuming to usurp the Throne while his Father was alive, and without his Knowledge.

*Ver.* 19. *And he hath slain Oxen and fat Cattle, and Sheep in abundance, and hath called all the Sons of the King, and Abiathar the Priest, and Joab the Captain of the Host: But Solomon thy Servant hath he not called.*] She very submissively calls her self his Handmaid, and her Son his Servant: The more to win upon his Affection unto those that humbly depended upon his Pleasure.

*Ver.* 20. *And thou, my Lord, O King, the Eyes of all Israel are upon thee, that thou shouldst*

*tell them who shall sit upon the Throne of my Lord the King after thee.*] This she said all *Israel* expected from the King, that she might free him from all Fear of such a Rebellion as *Absalom* raised; the People not being joined to *Adonijah*, but continuing in Suspence, 'till the King had declared his Mind about his Successor. Thus *Abarbinel*. And this Power of naming a Successor continued for some time after him, as appears by the Story of his Grandson *Reboboam*: Who though no great Man, yet took upon him this Authority of nominating a Successor, and made one of his youngest Sons, *viz.* *Abijah*, King after him. See 2 *Chron.* xi. 20, 22, &c. But this Custom did not last long; not being in use among their Neighbours: As the Story of the *Moabites* shews, 2 *Kings* iii. 27. Yet it was the Manner of excellent Princes among the *Romans* to appoint their Successor, whom the People gladly received. So *Augustus* did: And *M. Aurelius* commends *Nerva* for so doing.

*Ver.* 21. *Otherwise it shall come to pass, when my Lord the King shall sleep with his Fathers, that I and my Son Solomon shall be accounted Offenders.*] Guilty of Death for aiming at the Kingdom.

*Ver.* 22. *And lo, while she talked with the King, Nathan the Prophet also came in.*] To confirm what she had said, according to his Promise, *ver.* 14.

*Ver.* 23. *And they told the King, saying, Behold, Nathan the Prophet.*] Whereupon *Bathsheba*, it is likely, withdrew, as if she supposed he had some private Message to deliver unto *David*.

*And when he was come in before the King, he bowed himself before the King, with his Face to the Ground.* The Prophets themselves, as well as other Men, gave the profoundest Reverence to the King (as *Maimonides* observes) that they might teach all his Subjects their Duty. Nor was the High-Priest excepted. See *Schickard de Jure Regn. Cap.* 4. *Theorem* 13. The Hebrew Word is us'd for Religious Worship, in *Psalms* xlv. 12. xcv. 6. But very often, only for Political, and that very anciently, in *Gen.* xxiii. 7. *Ruth* ii. 10. 2 *Sam.* xvi. 14. and many other Places.

*Ver.* 24. *And Nathan said, My Lord, O King, hast thou said Adonijah shall reign after me, and he shall sit upon my Throne?*] He knew very well he had given no such Order; but he said this to awaken the King, to consider how presumptuous *Adonijah* was.

*Ver.* 25. *For he is gone down this Day, and hath slain Oxen, and fat Cattle, and Sheep in abundance, and hath called all the King's Sons, and the Captain of the Host, and Abiathar the Priest, and behold they eat and drink before him, and say, God save King Adonijah.*] By this time *Nathan* had received perfect Intelligence, what was the Design of that great Feast; and they had not only consulted to raise *Adonijah* to the Throne, but actually proclaimed him King. Which was more than *Bathsheba* had told him.

*Ver.* 26. *But me, even me thy Servant, and Zadok the Priest, and Benaiah the Son of Jehoiada, and thy Servant Solomon hath he not called.*] For he knew they



they were all faithful to King *David*; and would follow his Directions.

Ver. 27. *Is this thing done by my Lord the King, and thou hast not shewed it unto thy Servant, who shall sit upon the Throne of my Lord the King after him?*] In a matter of this Importance, he could not believe the King would act without his Advice: Whom he was wont to consult on other occasions; and who had acquainted him with the Mind of God concerning *Solomon*.

Ver. 28. *And King David answered and said, Call me Bathsheba:*] Who was withdrawn, as I said, into another Room, upon the coming in of *Nathan*: Or stood at a distance in the Room where they were.

*And she came into the King's Presence, and stood before the King.*] To understand his Pleasure.

Ver. 29. *And the King sware and said, As the LORD liveth, that hath redeemed my Soul out of all distress,*] Unto whom he was so much indebted, that it could not be thought he would take his Name in vain: But she might trust him now that he so solemnly sware again to her.

Ver. 30. *Even as I sware unto thee by the LORD God of Israel, saying, Assuredly thy Son shall reign after me, and he shall sit upon my Throne in my stead; even so will I certainly do this day.*] He had not forgotten his former Oath, which he now renews; and resolves immediately to put in execution.

Ver. 31. *Then Bathsheba bowed her Face to the Earth, and did reverence to the King,*] Most humbly acknowledged his Goodness; by a lower Reverence than she made before, ver. 16.

*And said, Let my Lord the King live for ever.*] There could be no higher Expression of Love and Thankfulness, than to desire never to see *Solomon* on the Throne, if it were possible for *David* always to enjoy it.

Ver. 32. *And King David said, Call me Zadok the Priest, and Nathan the Prophet, and Benaiab the Son of Jehoiada. And they came before the King.*] They were such trusty and resolute Persons, that he knew would not fear to execute his Commands.

Ver. 33. *And the King said unto them, Take with you the Servants of your Lord,*] His constant Guards, the *Cerethites* and *Peletites*. See ver. 38.

*And cause Solomon my Son to ride upon my own Mule,*] The rest of *David's* Sons were wont to ride upon Mules, when they went abroad, 2 *Sam.* xiii. 29. And *Absalom* rode upon a Mule, when he was hanged in the Oak, xviii. 9. But *David* had a Mule peculiarly reserved for himself alone; on which *Solomon* being set, it was the Beginning of his Royal Authority: For no private Person whatsoever, as *Abarbinel* observes, might ride upon the King's Mule. He also further notes, that *David* ordered him to ride upon a Mule, and not upon an Horse, because an Horse is prepared for Battel (*Prov.* xxi. 31.) but a Mule is a quiet Creature: Signifying the Peace, Tranquillity, and Security, which they enjoyed in *Solomon's* Reign. But the first is the more pertinent Observation: For it was capital (as *Maimonides* observes) to ride upon the King's Horse or Mule; or sit in his Throne;

or use his Scepter, &c. without the King's Order. As on the contrary, to have the Honour to ride upon his Horse, by his Order, was accounted the highest Dignity among the *Per- sians*, as appears by the Story of *Mordecai* in the sixth of *Esther*.

*And bring him down to Gibon.*] A Fountain on the West-side of *Jerusalem*, which divided itself into two Streams, as some say, and made two Pools: That of *Siloam*, and that of *Solomon* mentioned by *Josephus*, *Lib.* 6. *De Bello Judaico*, *Cap.* 38. But *Kimchi*, and *Abarbinel* also, take them only for different Names for one and the same Rivulet; which was called *Gibon*, and also *Siloam*, as the *Targum* hath it. Hither they were ordered to bring down *Solomon*, for it is a Maxim among the *Jews*, that they do not anoint a King, but near a Fountain: Though they have no Authority for it, that I know of, but from this Chapter: Where we read of *Adonijah's* going to *Enrogel*, ver. 9. and *Solomon's* being brought to *Gibon*; which was a Fountain, or Brook near *Jerusalem*: For thereabouts a great Number of People used always to be; whom they would have to observe it. The *Jews* give another Reason for it, in the *Talmud*; that it might be a Signification and good Omen of the Perpetuity of the Kingdom: Which should continue like a Fountain, which runs perpetually. See *Schickard* in his *Jus Regium*, *Cap.* 1. *Theor.* 4. But from what is said here of *Solomon*, we cannot safely make a general Conclusion that all Kings were anointed at Fountains. For *Saul* the first King was not; and in the History of *David*, who was anointed three times, there is no mention of it.

Ver. 34. *And let Zadok the Priest, and Nathan the Prophet, anoint him there King over Israel:*] One of them poured out the Oil, and the other anointed him, as the forenamed *Schickard* thinks it probable. Or, as others will have it, *Zadok* (as Vicar of the High-priest, who in his Absence performed all his Offices) did both: And *Nathan* the Prophet was Witness of the Divine Revelation and Promise that *Solomon* should succeed in the Kingdom. For *Abarbinel* is of opinion, that no King was anointed but by the Authority of a Prophet: Which is hard to be proved out of Scripture, as *Carpzovius* observes. See ver. 39.

*And blow ye with the Trumpet, and say, God save King Solomon.*] Proclaim him to be the King of *Israel*. The History of *Absalom* shews that he was proclaimed King by the Sound of the Trumpet, 2 *Sam.* xv. 10. And when God proclaimed his Law, and himself the King of *Israel*, the Sound of the Trumpet preceded with great Vehemence, *Exod.* xix. 16. And hence many Places in the *Psalms* are explained, which say, God went up with the Sound of the Trumpet, when, after the manner of Kings, he triumphed over his Enemies, xlvii. 5. xcvi. 6.

Ver. 35. *Then ye shall come up after him, that he may come and sit upon my Throne;*] Attend upon him to *Jerusalem*, and give him actual Possession of the Throne.

*For he shall be King in my stead, and I have appointed him to be Ruler over Israel, and over Judah.*] To have the same Authority over all the People that *David* had.



Ver. 36. *And Benaiah the Son of Jehoiada answered the King, and said, Amen:]* Gave his Consent in the Name of all the rest: And I suppose fware Allegiance to him.

*The LORD God of my Lord the King say so too.]* They all said the same, ver. 47. Nothing doubting God would establish his Authority.

Ver. 37. *As the LORD hath been with my Lord the King, even so be he with Solomon, and make his Throne greater than the Throne of my Lord King David.]* He knew David loved his Children so passionately, and desired their Happiness so much, that he was assured he should not offend him with this Wish. In the Targum it is, *As the WORD of the LORD hath helped my Lord the King, &c.*

Ver. 38. *So Zadok the Priest, and Nathan the Prophet, and Benaiah the Son of Jehoiada, and the Cherethites, and the Pelethites,]* This (and in ver. 43.) is the last Time that the Cherethites and Pelethites (whom Procopius Gazæus here calls *Funditores & Sagittarios*, Slingers and Archers) are mentioned in the holy Scriptures: For we read no more of them after the Death of David. Which makes it probable, that in their room, David himself in the Conclusion of his Reign had appointed those Troops, which we read of in 1 Chron. xxvii. to attend upon him every Month under their several Commanders: Which is the Conjecture of Corn. Bonaventura Bertram de Republ. Judaica. Cap. 10. p. 133. And these are they he thinks who guarded Joash, 2 Kings xi. 4, &c. called Ceri, or Cerim, i. e. Ariates (not much different from Cretbi) and Ratzim, which he translates *Cursores*. But I leave this to better Judgments.

*Went down, and caused Solomon to ride on the King's mule, and brought him to Gihon.]* According as King David had ordered, ver. 34.

Ver. 29. *And Zadok the Priest]* Here the anointing of him is attributed to the Priest alone. And indeed the Unctions which are said to be made by a Prophet, as Samuel anointed Saul and David, were private, but not publick: Which was always done by the Priest, as Fortunatus Scacchus hath endeavoured to shew in his Third Myrothecium, Cap. 49, and 50. It must be confessed that the Prophet anointed Saul in Gilgal, when he was publickly declared King. But then they offered Sacrifice, which could not be without the Priest: And the Israelites made a Covenant with David, when they anointed him in Hebron; which must be by feasting upon a Sacrifice offered by the Priest. Yet a great many of the Jews are confident that no Man, no not the High-priest, could anoint a King, but only a Prophet, as Samuel did David, and Nathan (Abarbinel here affirms) did Solomon, and Abijah did Jeroboam.

*Took an Horn of Oil]* A Vessel of Oil, as the Arabick translates it: Which Vessel was made of an Ox's Horn, as Bochartus observes, L. 2. Hierozoicon, Cap. 37. P. 1. They commonly made Cups of such Horns; whence the Greek Word *κεράσαι* to mingle Wine with Water. See Fortunatus Scacchus, Myrothec. 1 Cap. 48.

*Out of the Tabernacle, and anointed Solomon:]* This made his Unction more solemn, and his Person more sacred; because anointed with holy Oil. Though the Jews are generally of Opi-

nion, that it was not necessary to anoint their Kings with this holy Oil made by Moses. And indeed they all agree there was no Necessity of anointing them at all (the Son being sufficiently anointed by the Unction of his Father) unless there arose a Controversy about the Succession of the Crown. Thus Solomon was anointed because of the Function of Adonijah, Joash because of Athaliah, and Jehu because of Joram. See Selden L. 2. de Success. in Pontif. Cap. 9. and Schickard his Jus Regium, Cap. 1. Theorem 4. Fortunatus Scacchus also hath spent a whole Chapter, of a good length, to shew that private Unction might be made with any Oil: But a publick, by Oil taken from the Tabernacle. Whence it is said of David, *with my holy Oil have I anointed thee.* Yet he thinks that this Oil preserved in the Tabernacle for that Purpose, was not the same with the Oil made by Moses; where-with the High-priest alone was anointed. This he confirms by no contemptible Arguments, in his Myrothecium 3. Sacror. Eucharism. Cap. 48.

*And they blew the Trumpet, and all the People said, God save King Solomon.]* After the Unction followed the Acclamation of the People. See ver. 34.

Ver. 40. *And all the People came up after him,]* From Gihon unto Jerusalem.

*And the People piped with Pipes, and rejoiced with great joy,]* To see a King settled by David's Appointment: which they hoped might prevent all Contests about the Succession.

*So that the Earth rent with the sound of them.]* An hyperbolical Expression, to signify the very loud Noise the People made with their Shouts and their Pipes: Which were Instruments that had their Name among the Hebrews, from the many Holes that were in them: As the Illustrious Spanhemius observes upon Callimachus his Hymn ad Dianam, ver. 244. where he notes great Variety of them.

Ver. 41. *And Adonijah and all the Guests that were with him, heard it as they had made an end of eating:]* But, perhaps, were not yet risen from the Table. See ver. 49.

*And when Joab heard the sound of the Trumpet, he said, wherefore is this noise of the City, being in an uproar?] By this time Solomon was got into Jerusalem; from whence they could hear the Shouting, and the Sound of the Trumpet and Musick. Which Josephus saith was accompanied with a great Feast: Which is agreeable to 1 Chron. xxix. 21, 22. Joab was most concerned to enquire what the matter was; for if the City was in an Uproar, as he seems to suspect, it was his Business, as Captain of the Host, to suppress it.*

Ver. 42. *And while he yet spake, behold Jonathan the Son of Abiathar the Priest came,]* He had been employed by David to bring him intelligence (2 Sam xv. 27.) and it is likely was now left in Jerusalem by his Father's Order, to bring him News of what passed there.

*And Adonijah said unto him, Come in, for thou art a valiant Man, and bringest good tidings.]* Or rather, *thou art a virtuous Man:* For so the Word we here translate *valiant* is rendered in Prov. xii. 4. And so the Targum in this Place, *thou art a Man that fearest to sin:* And being a good Man, he hoped brought good Tidings, like himself.



Ver. 43. *And Jonathan answered and said to Adonijah, Verily our Lord King David hath made Solomon King.]* He tells him (according to his Character) he would not flatter him, but tell him the plain Truth: That *David* had not only declared *Solomon* should succeed him in the Throne; but actually made him King: and related the whole History of his Proceedings, in the following Words.

Ver. 44. *And the King hath sent with him Zadok the Priest, and Nathan the Prophet, and Benaiah the Son of Jehoiada, and the Cherethites, and Pelethites, and they have caused him to ride on the King's Mule.*

Ver. 45. *And Zadok the Priest and Nathan the Prophet have anointed him King in Gibon:]* By Authority from God, which *Nathan* I suppose pronounced; and then *Zadok* anointed him.

*And they are gone up from thence rejoicing, so that the Earth rang again: This is the noise that ye have heard.*

Ver. 46. *And also Solomon sitteth on the Throne of the Kingdom.]* He was in actual Possession of the Kingdom: Though his Father was alive. For to sit upon the Throne was proper to the King: and none else, on pain of Death, might be placed there. So *Valerius Maximus* speaks of the *Persians*, *Lib. 5. Cap. 16.*

Ver. 47. *And moreover, the King's servants came to bless King David, and said, God make the name of Solomon greater than thy name, and make his Throne greater than thy Throne:]* See ver. 37.

*And the King bowed himself upon the Bed.]* Worshipped God, and prayed it might be so.

Ver. 48. *And also thus said the King, Blessed be the LORD God of Israel, which has given one to sit on my Throne this day, mine Eyes even seeing it.]* He gave a solemn Thanks to God for the Happiness of seeing *Solomon* begin his Reign, with such Affection of his People, as they expressed by their Joy at his Inauguration. *Jonathan*, it appears by this, had been a diligent Observer of every thing that had been done in this Matter: For he omits nothing; but gives them a full and faithful Account.

Ver. 49. *And all the guests that were with Adonijah were afraid and rose up, and went every Man his way.]* They rose from Table where they were sitting, and departed every Man to his own Home in great haste; that it might not be known they had been with *Adonijah*: Who wanted those Marks of Royalty which were bestowed on *Solomon*: For he neither rode on the King's Mule, nor was he anointed; nor sat on the Throne of the Kingdom: Nor do we read of any Forces that he had with him to maintain his Title. Yet *Fortunatus Scacchus* thinks *Adonijah* wanted none of the Marks of Royalty (inasmuch that *Bathsheba* told *David* he reigned, ver. 18.) but this one alone. Which Defect threw down all the Regal Majesty of *Adonijah*, scattered all his Forces, and translated the Possession of the Kingdom to *Solomon*, as soon as he was consecrated, by this holy Unction, *Lib. 3. Myrothec. Cap. 47. p. 571.*

Ver. 50. *And Adonijah feared because of Solomon, and arose, and went and caught hold of the horns of the Altar.]* He thought he had committed a Crime worthy of Death, by usurping the

Kingdom without his Father's Consent, and against the known Design of God: And therefore he fled to the Altar for Safety and Protection. It being a privileged Place; not by the Appointment of the Law, but by the Custom of all Nations. It is a Question to what Altar he fled; whither to that at the Tabernacle in *Gibeon*; or to that newly built in the Threshing-floor of *Araunah* the *Jebusite*. Some think to this last, which was nearest; and it is expressly said of *Joab* in the next Chapter (ver. 29.) that he fled to the Tabernacle of the LORD; which is not said here.

Ver. 51. *And it was told Solomon, saying, Behold, Adonijah feared King Solomon: for lo, he hath taken hold of the Horns of the Altar, saying, Let Solomon swear to me to-day, that he will not slay his servant with the sword.]* He offered to surrender himself, and make no Opposition, if he might but be secured of his Life: Which he humbly begged by taking Sanctuary at the Altar. These Words, *to-day*, signify that he desired him from henceforth he would not punish him for what was past.

Ver. 52. *And Solomon said,]* He did not swear unto him, as he desired, but only declared.

*If he will shew himself a worthy Man, there shall not an hair of him fall to the Earth:]* He gave him a full Pardon for what was past; on condition he behaved himself as became a good Subject for the Time to come.

*But if wickedness be found in him, he shall die.]* If he did any thing (as *Abarbinel* glosses) which shewed that he had still a rebellious Mind, this Pardon should signify nothing: Because he had broken the Condition of it.

Ver. 53. *So King Solomon sent, and they brought him down from the Altar; and he came and bowed himself to King Solomon:]* He owned him for his Sovereign.

*And Solomon said unto him, Go to thine House.]* There to lead a private Life; and not go abroad with such an Equipage as he had done, ver. 5.

## CHAP. II.

Verse 1. **N**OW the days of *David* drew nigh, that he should die;] As he himself was sensible.

*And he charged Solomon his Son, saying,]* After the Example of *Abraham*, the Father of the Faithful, *Gen. xviii. 19.*

Ver. 2. *I go the way of all the earth:]* And so was unable to govern any longer.

*Be thou strong therefore, and shew thy self a Man.]* In Wisdom and in Courage.

Ver. 3. *And keep the charge of the LORD thy God, to walk in his ways, to keep his Statutes, and his Commandments, and his Judgments, and his Testimonies,]* Under these four Words are comprehended all the Laws of *Moses*: *Statutes*, being such Constitutions as had not their Foundation in Reason, but in the Will and Pleasure of God: As not to sow two Seeds of different kinds together, &c. (See *Drusus* and *Grotius* upon *Numb. xix. 2.* and *Masius* upon *Joshua xxiv. 25.*) *Commandments*, were moral Duties,



Duties which had a manifest Reason, as not to steal, &c. Judgments were the Laws belonging to Civil Government, in Things between one Man and another: Such as are mentioned *Exod. xxi.* and the following Chapters. And Testimonies were such Laws, as preserved the Remembrance of some great Things; and testified to them the Loving-kindness of the LORD; as the Sabbath; the Passover; and all the rest of the Feasts.

*As it is written in the Law of Moses;]* Which their Kings were bound not only to read, but to write a Copy of it with their own Hands; for their own Use; that they might learn to fear the LORD, &c. *Deut. xvii. 18, 19.*

*That thou mayest prosper in all that thou doest, and whithersoever thou turnest thyself:]* Or, *that thou mayest do wisely, &c.* as it is in the Margin. For there is no Policy like true Religion and Piety.

Ver. 4. *That the LORD may confirm his word which he spake concerning me, saying, If thy Children take heed to their ways, to walk before me in truth with all their heart, and with all their soul, there shall not fail thee (said he) a Man upon the Throne of Israel.]* To engage him to keep the Charge of the LORD, he represents unto him the gracious Promise which God had made him, to perpetuate the Kingdom in his Family without interruption (*2 Sam. vii. 15, 16. Psalm cxxxii. 12.*) provided his Children sincerely and heartily served God; in faithful Obedience to his Commands.

Ver. 5. *Moreover, thou knowest also what Joab the Son of Zeruiab did unto me,]* After he had given him his general Charge, he proceeded to direct him to do some particular Pieces of Justice and Kindness. And first of all bids him remember how Joab had used him: How insolently; for instance, he had treated him in his great Affliction, and threatened a new Rebellion (*2 Sam. xix. 7.*) and lately had set up Adonijah to reign, while he was yet alive. Or this may refer to what follows.

*And what he did to the two Captains of the Hosts of Israel, unto Abner the Son of Ner, and Amasa the Son of Jether, whom he slew,]* For this was a great Dishonour to David, who had given Abner safe Conduct; and passed his Word to Amasa that he should be Commander in chief of all his Forces: And therefore he might say it was done to himself. But it is an idle Conceit of the Jews in *Talkat*, and in other Books: Which refer these Words, *what he did to me*, unto his shewing the Letter which David wrote him concerning Uriah, unto the great Commanders in the Army (*2 Sam. xi. 15.*) and thereby exposed the King as a Murderer of one of his best Subjects. D. Kimchi mentions this upon this Place.

*And shed the Blood of War in peace; and put the Blood of War upon his girdle that was about his loins, and in his shoes that were on his feet.]* This was an high Aggravation of his Crime, that he did not only shed that Blood in Peace (speaking to them in a friendly manner when he shed it) but after he had done, he was not at all ashamed of it, but appeared with their Blood upon his Belt, and in his Shoes: As if he thought it a Glory to him, that he had slain them in a Battle with them.

Ver. II.

Ver. 6. *Do thou therefore according to thy wisdom, and let not his hoar head go down to the grave in peace.]* It was not safe to give any countenance to so bold a Man as Joab, who was of great Authority among the Soldiers: In a new Kingdom, and a young Man being King. Therefore if there was a fair Occasion, and he could do it prudently, he advises Solomon to cut him off. For David had not remitted his former Crimes (nor could he by the Law) but only deferred the Punishment of a Man who was very powerful, and very serviceable in his Wars. Though Abarbinel is of opinion, he was not cut off for those old Crimes: But the new one in following Adonijah would not be forgiven; because he had deserved so ill before on other accounts. But some move a Doubt, how Solomon being but a Youth could cut off Joab; which David durst not do, when he most flourished. Which will easily be resolved, if it be considered that now it was a Time of Peace, when Joab was less necessary: And Solomon's Reputation grew continually (*ver. 12.*) and so he was more respected than Joab; who now declined in his Interest, by reason of his Age.

Ver. 7. *But shew kindness unto the Sons of Barzillai the Gileadite, and let them be of those that eat at thy table:]* As Mephibosheth had done: Who, it is likely, was now dead, for otherwise he would not have forgotten him. David's Gratitude here is very remarkable; which extended it self to all the Sons of Barzillai: Who only desired him to be kind to Chimham, *2 Sam. xix. 37.*

*For so they came to me, when I fled because of Absalom thy Brother.]* That is, such Kindness they shewed to David, inviting him to Barzillai's House, who sustained him in his great Distress, *2 Sam. xix. 32.*

Ver. 8. *And behold, thou hast with thee Shimei the Son of Gera, a Benjamite,]* These Words, *thou hast with thee*, are understood by Abarbinel as if David had said, I see that thou art very familiar with Shimei; whom thou lovest and adviseest withall. But that he might not trust him, he remembers him how bitterly he was cursed by him in his Distress: And therefore might do as much by Solomon, as if he should fall into the like Trouble. And he thinks Solomon being young, might the more easily be drawn in to hearken to such a crafty Man's Counsel; because he did not follow Adonijah: for he takes him to be the Shimei mentioned in the foregoing Chapter, *ver. 8.* But the plain Sense of his having Shimei with him, is, that he was in his power, being one of his Subjects.

*Which cursed me with a grievous curse, in the day when I went to Mahanaim:]* *2 Sam. xvi. 5, 6, 7.*

*But he came down to me at Jordan, and I swore to him by the LORD, saying, I will not put thee to death with the sword.]* *2 Sam. xix. 18, 19, &c.*

Ver. 9. *Now therefore hold him not guiltless: For thou art a wise Man, and knowest what thou oughtest to do unto him; but his hoar head bring down unto the grave with Blood.]* His Intention was not, as Abarbinel glosses, that he should put him to death for his cursing him: But he admonishes Solomon not to trust him, nor follow his Advice, but if (saith he) he do to thee,

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as he did to me, that is any ways offend thee, do not forgive him as I did. *But bring down his bear Head, &c.* that is, though he be an old Man, let not that move thee to Clemency towards him: But punish him according to his Deserts. And *David* knew his Humour so well, that he did not doubt he would give *Solomon* Occasion to cut him off, and that he was so wise as not to spare him. In short, he did not bid him cut him off for cursing him; but only that he should cautiously observe him: And if he committed any new Offence worthy of Death, not pardon him as he had done.

Ver. 10. *So David slept with his Fathers, and was buried in the City of David.*] The Author before-mentioned is a little too conceited in his Interpretation of the first Part of these Words: Which he will have to signify not that *David* died (which is the common Import of this Phrase) but that his Soul rested in the other World, with those just and good Men that had been before him. But he observes well enough, that the latter part of this Verse informs us he was not buried in the Sepulchre of his Father (as *Saul* was, 2 Sam. xxi. 12, &c.) for that was in *Bethlehem*: But he being a great King, was buried in the chief City of the Kingdom; which he himself had founded, and where was the Throne of the House of *David*, Psal. cxxii. 5. He tells also out of *Josephus's* Antiquities (see Lib. 7. Cap. 12.) that there was a great Vault over his Sepulchre, in which was hid an immense Treasure: Unto which no body knew the Way, but those that understood the Artifice wherewith it was built. Out of this Vault they took in the Time of *Antiochus* so much Money as made him withdraw his Army from them. Which *Procopius Gazæus* also mentions. And *Herod* took out of it a great many Talents for the building of the Temple: But in following Times there was no Man to be found to whom the Secret was communicated, how to open it; so that no more Money was taken out from that Time. What Credit is to be given to this, I shall not determine, but suspect its Truth.

Ver. 11. *And the Days that David reigned over Israel, were forty Years: seven years reigned he in Hebron, and thirty three years reigned he in Jerusalem.*] The very same Account is given in 1 Chron. xxix. 27. But in 2 Sam. v. 5. it is said he reigned seven Years and six Months in *Hebron* (and the same is said before, Chapter ii. ver. 11.) which, with the three and thirty Years in *Jerusalem* make forty Years and an half. To solve this Difficulty (as some of the *Jews* esteem it) they have devised this Conceit: That *David* had a Leprosy six Months, to punish him for his Adultery with *Bathsheba*: All which time he being as a Dead Man, it is not accounted to his Reign. But they did not consider that the six Months was part of his Reign in *Hebron*, before he committed that Adultery in *Jerusalem*. Which shews that this is a frivolous Fancy; and the true Account of this Matter is, that the Scripture is wont to reckon only compleat Years (as *Kimchi* observes upon that Place of *Samuel*) and therefore omits the six Months, being but a Part of a Year. See vi. 38.

Ver. 12. *Then sat Solomon upon the Throne of David his Father, and his Kingdom was established greatly.*] This *Abârbinel* thinks may refer to the second solemn Investiture of *Solomon* by all the Estates of the Realm. Who confirmed that which had been done by a few (though by *David's* Order) at *Gibon*, 1 Chron. xxix. 22, 23.

Ver. 13. *And Adonijah the Son of Haggith came to Bathsheba the Mother of Solomon; and she said, Comest thou peaceably? And he said, Peaceably.*] She had some Reason to distrust him: Because by her Means he had lost the Kingdom.

Ver. 14. *He said moreover, I have something to say unto thee: And she said, Say on.*] He did not pretend to come to make her a Visit; but about some Business.

Ver. 15. *And he said, thou knowest that the Kingdom was mine,*] By right of Primogeniture.

*And that all Israel set their faces on me, that I should reign:*] The Kingdom, he pretends, was his by the Inclination of the Generality of the People to him, as *David's* Successor.

*Howbeit the Kingdom is turned about, and become my Brother's: for it was his from the LORD.*] Lest he should imagine he meant any Harm, or was inwardly disgusted at his being disappointed of the Kingdom, he calls *Solomon* his Brother; and intitles God to the Change: and therefore would not have her think he affected another Change; which would be to oppose the LORD.

Ver. 16. *And now I ask one petition of thee, deny me not: And she said, Say on.*] In the Hebrew the Words are, *turn not away my Face*: Which signify, that he should be very much ashamed, if she did not grant his Petition.

Ver. 17. *And he said, Speak I pray thee to Solomon the King (for he will not say thee nay) that he give me Abishag the Shunamite to wife.*] Both he and she surely were not ignorant, that it was unlawful for any Man to marry his Father's Wife: But they thought, because *David* knew her not, the Marriage was not completed.

Ver. 18. *And Bathsheba said, Well; I will speak for thee to the King.*] For she did not understand the Drift of this Desire: But was only forward to do Courtesies to a Man, fallen from very great Hopes.

Ver. 19. *Bathsheba therefore went unto king Solomon, to speak unto him for Adonijah: and the King rose up to meet her, and bowed himself unto her,*] For the high Honour to which he was advanced, did not make him forget the Honour due to a Parent: Unto whom he was also much indebted for his Preferment to the Kingdom.

*And sat down in his Throne, and caused a seat to be set for the King's Mother;*] In the Hebrew it is, a Throne to be set for her: It being a Seat in the form of a Throne, though not so glorious as the King's.

*And she sat on his right Hand.*] Which was the most honourable Place, next to himself, Psalm xlv. 9. cx. 1.

Ver. 20. *Then she said, I desire one small Petition of thee; I pray thee say me not nay.*] It is likely it was the first Petition she had made to him; and, as she thought, would cost him nothing: Which made her call it, a small Petition.

And



And the King said, Ask on, my Mother, for I will not say thee nay.] If the Thing were fit, and safe to be granted.

Ver. 21. And she said, Let Abishag the Shunamite be given to Adonijah thy Brother to wife.

Ver. 22. And King Solomon answered and said unto his Mother, And why dost thou ask Abishag the Shunamite for Adonijah? ask for him the Kingdom also;] He gently reprehends her Ignorance: For it is as if he had said, Dost you call this a small Petition? You had as good ask the Kingdom for him.

(For he is my elder Brother)] And hath that Pretence to the Kingdom: Unto which he would add this.

Even for him, and for Abiathar the Priest, and for Joab the Son of Zeruiab.] Who were all in this Plot. So the Hebrew Words, in the Opinion of Lud. de Dieu, are better rendered by the Chaldee Paraphrast, than by any other Interpreter. Was not he, and Abiathar, and Joab in this Counsel? The LXX more plainly, with him are Abiathar the Priest, and Joab the chief Commander of the Army: That is, they are his Complices, and have laid their heads together to give him this Counsel.

Ver. 23. And King Solomon swore by the LORD, saying, God do so to me, and more also, if Adonijah have not spoken this Word] Made this Request, which he knew came originally from him.

Against his own Life.] For he looked upon it as a treasonable Design, to ask David's Wife might become his. For according to the Custom of the Hebrews, no Man who had been the Servant of the King, might serve any other Master; nor might any Man ride upon the King's Horse; nor sit on his Throne, nor use his Scepter: As they say in the Title Sanhedrin, Cap. 2. Sect. 2, 5. Much less might any private Person marry the King's Widow: who belonged only to his Successor. Therefore God gave David all the Wives of Saul, 2 Sam. xii. 8. All which the Gemara upon that Place (Cap. 2. Sect. 14.) applies unto this History of Adonijah; whose Desire to marry the King's Widow (which was not lawful for any private Person) was looked upon as an affecting the Kingdom. So Cocceius glosses upon that Place. And indeed Adonijah seems to have understood well enough, that Abishag was wholly in the power of Solomon; and did not return to her Father's House, after the Death of David: But remained with him in his Possession, as one of those Things that were appropriated to him. Which moved Adonijah (as Abarbinel observes) to desire her of Solomon; and not address himself to her, or to her Relations; but to him, because she belonged to the Crown. See Selden Lib. 1. De Uxor. Hebr. Cap. 10.

Ver. 24. Now therefore, as the LORD liveth, which hath established me in the Throne of my Father, and hath made me an House,] That is, a Royal Family.

As he promised,] In 2 Sam. vii. 12, 13.

Adonijah shall be put to death this day.] He repeats the Oath, to signify it was his unalterable Resolution he should not live; but he put to death, without delay: Which in such Cases is very dangerous.

Ver. 25. And King Solomon sent by the Hand of Benaiab the Son of Jehoiada, and he fell upon him that he died.] For such Executions were there done not by mean Persons, but by Men of Eminence: Who at the King's Command cut off Offenders. See Judges viii. 20.

Ver. 26. And unto Abiathar the Priest the King said, Get thee to Anathoth, thine own field,] This was a City of the Priests (Josh. xxi. 28.) Where he commanded him to lead a private Life: Either in that Part of the Suburbs, which fell to his share; or in some Land which he had purchased, as Jeremiah afterwards did, Jerem. xxxiii. 6, 7, 8.

For thou art worthy of Death: But at this time I will not put thee to death,] He seems now only to reprieve him; that he might keep him upon his good Behaviour; for if hereafter he gave just Cause, he might put him to death, as well as now put him out of his Office.

Because thou barest the Ark of the LORD God before David my Father,] He was faithful to him in the Rebellion of Absalom: When he brought the Ark from Jerusalem to accompany him, 2 Sam. xv. 24, 29.

And because thou hast been afflicted in all wherein my Father was afflicted.] Underwent all the Hardships that David endured, all the Time of his Exile under Saul; 1 Sam. xxii. 20, 21, &c.

Ver. 27. So Solomon thrust out Abiathar from being Priest unto the LORD, that he might fulfil the word of the LORD, which he spake concerning the House of Eli in Shiloh.] Which might partly move Solomon to deprive him. See 1 Sam. ii. 31, &c.

Ver. 28. Then tidings came to Joab,] That Adonijah was put to death; and Abiathar banished.

(For Joab had turned after Adonijah; though he had not turned after Absalom)] The Reason of which, Abarbinel thinks, was, because Solomon was very young, and not fit, he thought, to manage publick Affairs: And his Mother also had a Blot upon her.

And Joab fled unto the Tabernacle of the LORD,] Which was at Gibeon. See the foregoing Chapter, ver. 51. This makes it appear that Joab had a hand in the Counsel before mentioned, ver. 22. as Solomon suspected.

And caught hold on the Horns of the Altar.] Which were four, at each Corner thereof: In Height, as the Jews say, five Hand-breadths; that is, a common Cubit. Here he thought to save himself, according to the Custom of all Nations, who fled to their Altars, when they were guilty of any great Crime, and were in great Danger. But Jewish Doctors say, Joab was mistaken in two Things. First, in fancying there was Security from thence for a wilful Murderer: And Secondly, in that he looked for Safety by taking hold of the Horns of the Altar, whereas the Refuge of the Altar (as Kimchi saith) was on the Top of it only. But I look upon this as frivolous; Rasi's Opinion is better: That as God appointed them Cities of Refuge whither the Man-slayer should flee, when they came into the Land of Canaan, Exod. xxi. 13. so while they were in the Wilderness, the Camp of the Levites served for that purpose. And the following Words, ver. 14. declaring



declaring that if a Man committed a presumptuous Murder, he should be taken from the Altar and put to death: It not only confirms what he saith, but intimates, that even in the Land of *Canaan* the Altar continued a Refuge for those that fled to it. But then this Question arises, Why *Joab* (who, as the *Jews* fancy, was President of the great *Sanhedrin*, and understood the Law) should think to find Shelter here, being a wilful Murderer. To which the *Jews* answer, that he hoped hereby to save his Estate, which otherways would have been forfeited. So they say in the *Gemara Sanhedrin*, Cap. 6. N. 7. He hoped to be condemned by the Judgment of the *Sanhedrin*, and then his Goods would go to his Heirs: Whereas if he was cut off by the King, they would fall to him. See *Cocceius* there, *Annot.* 2. Others say, he hoped to obtain Burial by this means. But I take these to be meer Conceits. It is more probable, that, as *Dr. Lightfoot* conjectures, he hoped to obtain a Pardon, as *Abiathar* had done; by consecrating himself to God and to his Service: As he did, he thinks, by this solemn Ceremony. For the laying hold of the Altar had a Vow in it for the future, as well as the Hope of present Safety. Which may be argued from the Name of the Altar: Which made that which touched it to be holy. See his *Treatise of the Temple*, Chap. 34. Sect. 3.

Ver. 29. *And it was told King Solomon that Joab was fled unto the tabernacle of the LORD, and behold he is by the Altar. Then Solomon sent Benaiah the Son of Jehoida, saying, Go fall upon him.*] Which Punishment, as *Abarbinel* observes, was not inflicted on him for killing *Abner* and *Amasa*: Though the Remembrance of that innocent Blood which he shed moved him not to pardon the Faults he had newly committed: First, in setting up *Adonijah* to be King while his Father was living, which was no better than Rebellion; being done without *David's* Order: And Secondly, in this new Attempt to pretend to the Kingdom, by advising him to beg *Abisbag* for his Wife. *Solomon* did not punish him for the former, because he had pardoned *Adonijah*: And therefore would not be severe against his Adherents. But he renewing his traitorous Designs, he thought fit to cut them both off: And *Joab* thought he deserved no less, as appears by his flying to the Altar. Which was an Acknowledgment that he was guilty of that Crime which *Solomon* charged upon him; in being one of the wicked Counsellors of *Adonijah*: And therefore deserved to die. Thus he.

Ver. 30. *And Benaiah came to the Tabernacle of the LORD, and said, Thus saith the King, come forth:*] The forenamed Author thinks that *Benaiah* had a mind to bring him to *Solomon*, and try to get his Pardon; so far as to have him only deposed from his Office, as *Abiathar* was. *And he said, Nay, but I will die here.*] Which he said, that he might bring *Solomon* into the People's Hatred, for staining the House of God with Blood.

*And Benaiah brought the King word, saying, Thus said Joab, and thus he answered me.*] This Interpreters generally take to be but the Repetition of the same Thing in different Words: But

*Abarbinel* takes them for two distinct Answers of *Joab*; in which he refuses to come from the Place where he was; and pronounces the Sentence upon himself; and desires no Pardon. For those Words, *thus saith Joab*; respect (he thinks) the Sentence which he pronounced on himself, that he would die: And those Words, *thus he answered*; signify he would not come from the Altar.

Ver. 31. *And Solomon said to Benaiah, Do as he hath said, and fall upon him; and bury him;*] Kill him at the very Altar, where he resolves to die: After which he would not deny him Burial suitable to his Quality; ver. 34. But many think, he did not kill him at the very Altar; but dragged him from thence, and then slew him. For what Need was there to defile the Holy Place with Blood? And so the Command is; *Exod.* xxi. 14. Though others are of opinion, that *Solomon* did think fit to have him killed at the very Altar; to let all Men see that no Place, though ever so Holy, should secure any Man from the Hand of Justice.

*That thou mayest take away the innocent Blood which Joab shed,*] He means the Blood of those two Persons mentioned in the next Verse: Whose Murder (as I said before) was not the immediate Reason of *Joab's* Death: But the Words of *Solomon* are to be understood (*Abarbinel* thinks) as if he had said to *Benaiah*, Do not imagine thou shalt offend God, by killing *Joab* at the very Altar, but rather perform an acceptable Service to him: By cutting off a Man who deserves to die, not only upon the account of *Adonijah*; but of the innocent Blood which he shed heretofore. So the Business of *Adonijah* was the principal Cause of his Death: The other only the secondary; which he remembers, that he might warrant *Benaiah* to kill him in the Tabernacle.

*From me, and from the House of my Father.*] The Crimes of *Joab* in killing those two Men could not be punished by the House of Judgment, because there were no Witnesses of that Murder: But *David* might have done it by such Proofs as satisfied him of his Guilt. Yet he omitted it, because *Joab* was so potent in the Army: And so *Solomon* feared the Guilt might stick upon his Family if it were not wiped off by this Execution upon *Joab*.

Ver. 32. *And the LORD shall return his Blood upon his own Head,*] Make him alone bear the Punishment of his Iniquity.

*Whofell upon two Men more righteous and better than he, and slew them with the Sword, my Father not knowing thereof; to wit, Abner the Son of Ner, Captain of the Host of Israel, and Amasa the Son of Jether, Captain of the Host of Judah.*] His Crime was the more heinous, because it brought a Suspicion upon *David*, as if it had been done by his Order: Which Calumny he laboured to wipe off, by the unfeigned Grief he expressed for *Abner*, 2 *Sam.* iii. 37.

Ver. 33. *Their Blood therefore shall return upon the Head of Joab, and upon the Head of his Seed for ever:*] Why doth he repeat what he said before? *Abarbinel* answers, it is not a meer Repetition; but *Solomon* pronounces that the Curse of *David* should come upon him: So that *Joab's* own Death should



not expiate the Guilt; but his Posterity should suffer for it in future Generations; according to what David said, 2 Sam. iii. 28, 29.

*But upon David; and upon his Seed, and upon his House, and upon his Throne shall be peace for ever before the LORD.]* He prays and prophesies that his Family and Kingdom might never suffer upon this Account: NOW that the Sin which had not been punished in David's Life-time, had received a just Punishment from him.

Ver. 34. *So Benaiah the Son of Jehoiada went up, and fell upon him, and slew him;]* He is said to go up, because Gibeon, where Joab was at the Tabernacle; was an high Place:

*And he was buried]* It is not said who took care of his Burial; but it is likely Benaiah. (See ver. 21.) Because Joab was a Man of Dignity, and one of the Royal Family.

*In his own House in the Wilderness.]* He did not bury him in the House; but in some Ground belonging to it, and accounted a part of the Habitation: Which was in the Wilderness. So they called those Parts of the Country which were but thinly inhabited. And Abarbinel is of Opinion; that here Joab had built an Hospital, where he provided in several Rooms, a Bed, a Table, and a Candlestick for poor Travellers.

Ver. 35. *And the King put Benaiah the Son of Jehoiada in his room over the Host; and Zadok the Priest did he put in the room of Abiathar.]* It is evident that Zadok was a great Man before this; at least the Vicar of the High-priest Abiathar. Who was, as some of the Jews fancy, deprived by David himself, or suspended from his Office, upon his anointing Adonijah. But no such Anointing is mentioned in the Story of Adonijah: Nay; it is most likely (as I before observed) that he wanted it: And therefore he remained High-priest, 'till now that Solomon removed him, and translated that great Office from the Family of Ithamar to that of Eleazar (according to the Threatning against Eli, 1 Sam. ii. 30.) in which it continued 'till the Time of the Captivity; no Notice being taken of Jonathan the Son of Abiathar mentioned in the foregoing Chapter; ver. 42. and in 1 Sam. xv. 27. See Selden de Succession. in Pontif. Lib. 1. Cap. 4, 5. and Grotius De Imperio Sum. Potestat. Where he observes (Cap. 10.) that the Sagan or Vicar of the High-priest, had rather a Hope; than a Right to succeed in the Office of High-priest. For Maimonides saith, the Sanhedrin chose him out of the Family of Aeron; but here it is plain the King disposed of that Office: For otherwise it could not be said truly, that Solomon put Zadok in the room of Abiathar; by the same authority that he put Benaiah in the room of Joab. Bellarmine indeed, for fear Kings should be thought superior to the High-priest, saith, Solomon did this not as a King but as a Prophet. Lib. 2. de Pontifico, Cap. 29. But Solomon was not yet a Prophet; and all they who had Royal Authority in the Time of the Macedonians, and Romans, and the Posterity of Herod, challenged to themselves this Power of making an High-priest: Though they left to the Jews an *αυτονομία* (the Government of themselves by their own Laws) in other things.

Ver. 36. *And the King sent and called for Shimei, and said unto him, Build thee an House in Jerusalem, and dwell there, and go not forth thence any whither]* It was fit to confine such a turbulent Man as Shimei was; and not suffer him to go about whither he pleased, throughout the Tribes of Israel, where he might stir up Sedition. But it was very kind to confine him to such a pleasant Place as Jerusalem, and the Suburbs of it: Which made Abarbinel renew his Conceit (from those Words of David, *thou hast with thee Shimei*) that Solomon had a great Love to him, and made him his Familiar. But it is more reasonable to think that Solomon suspected his Fidelity; and therefore would have him always in his eye, in the Royal City.

Ver. 37. *For it shall be, that on the Day thou goest out, and passest over the Brook Kidron, thou shalt know for certain, that thou shalt surely die:]* He mentions the Brook Kidron, because that was in the way to Baharim; where Shimei dwelt: As appears by comparing 2 Sam. xv. 23. with xvi. 5. But Solomon's Intention was, that if he went out of Jerusalem any way, to a greater Distance than Kidron was from thence, he should die for it. For when he went to Gath after his Servants; he went directly the quite contrary Way; that City lying Westward of Jerusalem, as Kidron did Eastward.

*Thy Blood shall be on thine own head.]* He should be guilty, and no body else, of his Death: For it was in his power to preserve his Life.

Ver. 38. *And Shimei said unto the King, The saying is good:]* He confesses the King's Kindness in this Injunction; and that he was beholden to him; for laying no greater Burden upon him.

*As my Lord the King hath said; so will thy Servant do.]* Which he confirmed by an Oath; ver. 42. 43.

*And Shimei dwelt in Jerusalem many days.]* Three Years, as it follows in the next Verse.

Ver. 39. *And it came to pass at the end of three Years, that two of Shimei's Servants ran away unto Achish the Son of Maachar King of Gath: and they told Shimei, saying, Behold, thy servants be in Gath.]* Achish had been so great a Friend to David; that though David had conquered the Philistines, yet he suffered Achish still to retain the Title of King, and to be only tributary to him: so that there was a friendly Correspondence between his City and Jerusalem; where Shimei might easily hear, by somebody or other, who had been at Gath, that his Servants were there.

Ver. 40. *And Shimei arose, and saddled his Ass, and went to Gath; to Achish, to seek his Servants:]* In three Years time he thought Solomon might have forgotten his Injunction; or he presumed he would not hold him strictly to it: especially since he did not go from Jerusalem for his Pleasure; but to recover what he had lost; which he thought was pardonable. For these Servants, it is likely, were worth a great deal of Money: Wherewith he had purchased them.

*And Shimei went and brought his Servants from Gath.]* Where Achish would not protect them: being in Friendship with the Israelites.

Ver. 41.



Ver. 41. *And it was told Solomon that Shimei had gone from Jerusalem to Gath, and was come again.]* If Solomon had not constant Spies about Shimei, to watch his Motions; yet such a Journey as this could not be well undertaken so secretly, but some or other would observe it, and inform against him.

Ver. 42. *And the King sent and called for Shimei, and said unto him, Did I not make thee swear by the LORD, and protested unto thee, saying, Know for certain, that on the day thou goest out, and walkest abroad any whither, thou shalt surely die? and thou saidst unto me, the word that I have heard, is good.]* He repeats their Agreement; and only adds that he made Shimei solemnly swear that he would stand to it, and did thankfully accept it.

Ver. 43. *Why then hast thou not kept the Oath of the LORD, and the Commandment that I have charged thee with?] He lay under a double Guilt of breaking his Oath to God, and of disobeying the King's Command.*

Ver. 44. *And the King said moreover to Shimei, Thou knowest all the wickedness that thine heart is privy to, that thou didst to David my Father:]* He knew upon what wicked Principles he cursed David, and what inward Hatred and Malice he had to him: And what villanous Designs against him, if he could have accomplished them.

*Therefore the LORD shall return thy wickedness upon thine own head;]* Upon which, if he reflected, he could not but see the Justice of God, in letting him fall into other Crimes, which deserved Death.

Ver. 45. *And King Solomon shall be blessed, and the Throne of David shall be established before the LORD for ever.]* To which Shimei wished Confusion: But the LORD turned his Curses into Blessing, as David hoped, 2 Sam. xvi. 12.

Ver. 46. *So the King commanded Benaiah the Son of Jehoiada, which went out, and fell upon him, that he died:]* He went out from the Presence of the King, and carried Shimei along with him: And then did Execution upon him.

*And the Kingdom was established in the hand of Solomon.]* By the Removal of these bad Men before mentioned: And by the Alliances he made, mentioned in the next Chapter, &c.

### CHAP. III.

Verse 1. **A**ND Solomon made affinity with Pharaoh King of Egypt, and took Pharaoh's Daughter,] To be his Wife. Which was not unlawful, if she was first made a Proselyte to the Jewish Religion; as in all probability she was. For though his Wives drew him in to worship strange Gods; yet the Gods of the Egyptians are not reckoned among them, xi. 5, 6, &c. which is a Sign she was not a Worshipper of other Gods. Hitherto also Solomon loved the LORD, as it is said, ver. 3. and was beloved of him, as his appearing to him in Gibeon shews, ver. 5.

*And brought her into the City of David,]* Unto his Palace at Jerusalem: Which was after he had begun to build the Temple, as they say, in *Seder Olam Rabba*, Cap. 15.

*Until he had made an end of building his own House, and the House of the LORD,]* After which he built an House on purpose for this Wife to dwell in, ix. 24. 2 Chron. viii. 11. But first he built God's House, then his own, and then the Walls of Jerusalem.

*And the Wall of Jerusalem round about.]* If David encompassed it with a Wall, as some think is signified, 2 Sam. v. 9. Solomon made another Wall, and thereby made it stronger than David left it. Or else, he repaired the Wall which David had built and raised it higher.

Ver. 2. *Only the People sacrificed in high Places, because there was no House built unto the name of the LORD, until those days.]* This is a short Account of the Happiness of Solomon's Reign hitherto, that there was nothing in it blameable, but only the People's sacrificing in high Places. Which having been ancient Places of Worship (in Groves or Woods, on the top of Hills) the People continued to resort thither, to perform that Worship which God had appointed. So that there was no fault in the Worship it self, but only in the Place of it. And he gives the Reason why the People took this Liberty, because there was not an House built, to be a settled Place for Worship: The Tabernacle also had been removed from Place to Place a long Time; and was not fixed 'till it came to Jerusalem. Concerning high Places, see upon Deut. xii. 2. Cornel. Bertram indeed fetches the Original of them from the Cities of the Levites, where they kept Schools, and had Places for Prayer: And where he thinks the People at last sacrificed in the highest part of the City: *De Repub. Judaica*, Cap. 15. But this Custom seems, more likely, to have been derived from the ancient Patriarchs, and was imitated by the Gentiles as well as Jews.

Ver. 3. *And Solomon loved the LORD, walking in all the Statutes of David his Father:]* Following his Directions, who commanded him carefully to observe all God's Laws, ii. 2, 3.

*Only he sacrificed and burnt incense in high Places.]* Which David his Father had never done (as far as appears by his History) which renders Solomon's Fault the greater, in following the common Practice of all the Nations, rather than the Example of his pious Father.

Ver. 4. *And the King went to Gibeon to sacrifice there; for that was a great high Place:]* Because the Tabernacle was there, and the great Brazen Altar which Moses made. For after Shiloh was destroyed, it was carried to Nob: And the Priests being there slain by Saul, it was carried to Gibeon, 2 Chron. i. 3. Where the Jews say, there was the greatest Synagogue in all the Land.

*A thousand Burnt-offerings did Solomon offer upon that Altar.]* It is not easy to apprehend how so many Sacrifices should be consumed upon an Altar, which was but five Cubits square: For I suppose he speaks of Moses his Altar, which was of no larger Dimensions. But Kimchi hath well observed, that we must not fancy they were all offered upon one Day: But during the Time he stayed at Gibeon before he returned to Jerusalem. Yet if we suppose this was at some of the great Festivals, none of which lasted above seven Days, it must be acknowledged a wonderful thing, that so many should be consumed,



fumed, though offered both at Morning and Evening Sacrifice. The *Jews* therefore do acknowledge a Miracle herein, as there were many, they say, continually at the Temple: Which are disbelieved, because the *Jews* are accounted fabulous Writers: But if well considered, some of them at least carry good Reason in them. For Instance, they say the Smoak of the Sacrifices went always directly up to Heaven in a steady Pillar, and was not blown about with every Puff of Wind, as Smoak commonly is. For if it had not been so, when there was a vast Number of Sacrifices offered, no Man would have been able to stand in the Court of the LORD's House: The Fire also upon the Altar was exceeding quick and devouring, being Cœlestial Fire, which dispatched the Sacrifice sooner than ordinary Fire would have done: So Dr *Lightfoot* observes in his *Treatise of the Temple*, Cap. 34. Sect. 1. From whence it was called *Ariel*, the Lion of God, because it was so devouring. And therefore after the Return from their Captivity from *Babylon* (as *L'Empereur* observes out of the *Gemara*) the Altar was made larger; because the Fire burnt more slowly, when they wanted that Heavenly Flame, which was strong and powerful. *Annot. in Cod. Middelsh.* Cap. 1. Sect. 1. pag. 103.

Ver. 5. *In Gibeon God appeared to Solomon in a dream by night:*] Perhaps he thought he saw the Divine Glory shine round about him: Or else the Meaning is, God revealed himself in a Dream, as the *Targum* here expresses it, *the LORD was revealed to Solomon by Night*. When Men have often seen that represented to them, which they found true when they were awake. As *Tully* shews by many Instances; especially out of *Aristotle's* famous Story of the two Men that travelled together to *Megara*: One of which being killed in his Inn, the other, who lay in a Friend's House, had all the Fact represented clearly and distinctly to him, in his Dream, as if he had seen it done; so that he found out the Murderers in the Morning. See Lib. 1. *De Divinatione*, Cap. 24, 25, 26, &c.

And God said, *Ask what I shall give thee.*] He heard a Voice speaking to him, and bidding him ask what he desired, and it should be bestowed upon him. This Voice he took to be from God (as appears by his Answer) who herein shewed himself very gracious to *Solomon*, and also made a Trial of his Inclinations.

Ver. 6. *And Solomon said, Thou hast shewn unto David my father great mercy, according as he walked before thee in truth and righteousness, and in uprightness of heart with thee; and thou hast kept for him this great kindness, that thou hast given him a son to sit upon his throne; as at this day.*] Thankful Acknowledgments of Mercies already received (as *St Chrysostome* notes) invite new Blessings to be bestowed upon us. *Upright-ness of heart*, here ascribed to *David*, doth not signify that he was without Fault (for the contrary is evident, that he was guilty of great Transgressions against the Moral Law) but it is spoken in Opposition to *Saul*, who was rejected for controuling the Orders of God.

Ver. 7. *And now, O LORD my God, thou hast made thy servant king, instead of David my*

*father; and I am but a little child:* I know not how to go out, or how to come in.] There are those, particularly *Rashi*, who think he was but twelve Years old when he spake these Words; and therefore calls himself *Naar* a Child. But *Abarbinel* hath shewn that they ground this upon an uncertain Computation: And that if he was but a Child of twelve Years old now, he must have begun to reign when he was but seven or eight Years old: For he had sat some Time upon the Throne, as appears by the foregoing Story, when he had this Dream. And his Father calls him a *wise Man* when he left the Throne to him, Chap. ii. 6, 9. And from many other strong Arguments he concludes him to have been at least Twenty Years old when he began to reign; and therefore calls himself here a Child, with Respect only to his Skill in managing publick Affairs; as is signified in the last Words, *I know not how to go out, &c. i. e.* to govern so great a People, for want of Experience. Thus *Benjamin* is called a Child, *Gen.* xvi. 20. and *Moses* calls *Joshua* by the same Name (*Exod.* xxxii. 10.) though they were above Thirty Years old. And the Sons of *Eli*, when they ministred as Priests, *1 Sam.* ii. 17.

Ver. 8. *And thy servant is in the midst of thy people which thou hast chosen; a great people, that cannot be numbred or counted for multitude.*] And consequently great Abilities were required to do exact Justice to them all.

Ver. 9. *Give therefore thy servant an understanding heart, to judge thy people, that I may discern between good and bad: for who is able to judge so great a people?*] That is, without the Divine Guidance and Assistance, he thought it impossible to understand what was Law in all Cases; so as dexterously to dispatch Business, and decide all Differences. For young Men, as *Aristotle* observes, are unfit for Government; because in them, τὸ βουλευτικὸν ἀτελές, their consultive Power is very imperfect, as he speaks in the first Book of his *Politicks*, Cap. 7. And therefore in his Book *ad Nichomachum*, he will not so much as admit a young Man to the Lectures of *Politicks*; τῆς πολιτικῆς ἐκ εἰν ἀνεπαρκῆς οἰκείος ὁ νεός. But this is not universally true, as we see not only in the Example of *Solomon*, who was extraordinarily accomplished by God in his Youth for the greatest Things: But by some Examples among the Heathen, of young Men who managed the weightiest Affairs with as much Prudence as they who were of the greatest Experience. Witness *Scipio*, and *Octavianus Augustus*. But such Persons were rarely found: So that *Solomon* himself saith, *Who to the land whose king is a child*, *Eccles.* x. 16.

Ver. 10. *And the speech pleased the LORD, that Solomon had asked this thing.*] For it was a Token of a virtuous Mind, and a publick Spirit: That desired above all Things the Honour of God, and the Good of his People.

Ver. 11. *And God said unto him, Because thou hast asked this thing, and hast not asked for thy self long life, neither hast asked riches for thy self, nor hast asked the life of thine enemies,*] Which are Things of which Men are naturally most desirous.

*But hast asked for thy self understanding to discern judgment;*] As far transcending long Life, Wealth, and Victory over Enemies.



Ver. 12. *Behold, I have done according to thy words: Lo, I have given thee a wife and understanding heart, so that there was none like thee before thee, neither after thee shall any arise like unto thee.*] For other wise Men gather their Knowledge by Study, and Observation, and other Helps (as *Abarbinel* here notes) but *Solomon* had his by Inspiration: So that he went to Bed an ignorant Man, but awaked in the Morning like an Angel of God. At once, as his Words are, he who was like other Men, was made like the Son of God. For he had not only the Skill of Government imparted to him; but a general Knowledge of all other things, as the following History tells us. Whence he fancies he calls himself *Agur*, *Prov. xxx. 1.* because in him there was a Collection of all manner of Wisdom and Knowledge, and this imparted from God. Which is the Reason, he imagines, why he does not call himself *Oger*, which is an active Word, but *Agur*, which is a passive: Because he did not gather all his Wisdom himself, but it was given him from the Hand of God.

Ver. 13. *And I have also given thee that which thou hast not asked, both riches and honour:*] These are absolutely promised him: But here is no mention of long Life; for that depended upon the Condition of his steadfast Obedience to God, as it follows in the next Verse.

*So that there shall not be any among the kings like unto thee all thy days.*] He promises he should excel all the Kings that were in his Time, in Riches and Renown: Though there were richer in future Ages, as *Alexander* and others were.

Ver. 14. *If thou wilt walk in my ways, and keep my statutes and commandments, as thy father David did walk, then I will lengthen thy days.*] This God himself mentions, in the first Place, (*ver. 11.*) as the greatest Worldly Blessing; especially when accompanied with great Riches and Honour: Which *Solomon* was not to expect, unless he continued obedient to God.

Ver. 15. *And Solomon awoke, and behold, it was a dream:*] He saw and heard all the foregoing things so clearly and distinctly in his Sleep, as if he had been awake; and did not know 'till he awoke, that all was done in a Dream; which was one Way of God's revealing himself to his Prophets. But *Maimonides* I think is here a little too curious; for from these Words, *Behold it was a dream*, he concludes this was an inferior Degree of Prophecy from what others had in Dreams. For they that prophesied in Dreams, do not call it afterwards a Dream; but simply say, it was a Prophecy. So when the Patriarch *Jacob* awoke out of a Dream of Prophecy, he did not say it was a Dream, but faith absolutely, *Surely God is in this place*, &c. *Gen. xxviii. 16.* *More Necho. Lib. 2. Cap. 45.*

*And he came to Jerusalem, and stood before the ark of the covenant of the LORD,*] Which was there in a Tabernacle which *David* pitched for it (*2 Sam. v. 17.*) though the Tabernacle which *Moses* made remained at *Gibeon*; where *Solomon* had been to worship.

*And offered burnt-offerings, and offered peace-offerings,*] Giving Thanks to God, that he had been pleased to speak with him, and reveal himself to him.

*And made a feast for all his servants.*] Upon the Sacrifices of Peace-Offerings it is likely, which he had offered: Whereby he endeared himself unto them. For nothing more wins Mens Affection than Bounty, Affability, Clemency, and such like Virtues.

Ver. 16. *Then came two women that were harlots, unto the king,*] They kept an House of publick Entertainment, as the *Targum* translates it, and perhaps were also common Women: But then, the *Jews* suppose they were not *Israelites*, but Strangers; and so not comprehended in the Law, *Deut. xxiii. 17.*

*And stood before the king.*] As they used to do, who brought any Cause before a Court to be judged.

Ver. 17. *And the one woman said, O my Lord, I and this woman dwell in one house, and I was delivered of a son with her in the house.*] This Case, as *Abarbinel* thinks, should have been first brought into some of the inferior Courts, near the Place where they lived; and if they could not have determined it, then to the great *Sanhedrin*: And if they found it too hard for them, then they should have brought it to the King: Who otherwise might have easily erred, no Inquisition having been made into the matter, if a Divine Spirit had not directed him. But this Opinion of *Abarbinel* is grounded on another Fancy, that there was a great *Sanhedrin* in these Days, which cannot be proved.

Ver. 18. *And it came to pass that the third day after I was delivered, that this woman was delivered also:*] Of another Son: Which being born so soon after the other, they could not be distinguished by their Age.

*And we were together; there was no stranger with us in the house, save we two in the house.*] So that there was no Witness of what passed between them; but all relied on their own Credit: Which made the Case more difficult.

Ver. 19. *And this woman's child died in the night; because she overlaid it.*] Some Marks upon the Body, it is likely, discovered, that it was smothered: And *Kimchi* here notes, that if it had died of a Disease, it would have cried, and the Neighbours been called in, and the thing been known.

Ver. 20. *And she rose at midnight, and took my son from beside me, while thy handmaid slept, and laid it in her bosom, and laid her dead child in my bosom.*] This made the Matter obscure: For how should she know what her Companion did, when she was asleep?

Ver. 21. *And when I arose in the morning to give my child suck, behold it was dead: but when I had considered in the morning,*] When it was perfect Day; which it was not when she arose to suckle the Child.

*Behold, it was not my son which I did bear.*] There was some Resemblance, it is likely, in the Features of the two Children; so that the Neighbours did not know the one from the other: But the Mother, who had carefully observed it, knew by some Tokens that this dead Child was none of her's.

Ver. 22. *And the other woman said, Nay; but the living is my son, and the dead is thy son: and this said, No; but the dead is thy son, and the living is mine. Thus they spake before the king.*]

One



One affirming what the other denied; but having no Evidence to make Proof of what they said.

Ver. 23 *Then said the king, The one saith this is my son that liveth, and thy son is the dead: and the other saith, Nay, but thy son is the dead, and my son is the living.*] From hence the *Jews* argue, that the Judges before they pronounced Sentence, were bound to sum up the Evidence that had been given on both Sides: That it might be seen they had observed and understood their Allegations, and accordingly gave Judgment. For thus *Solomon* doth in this Case, where there was no more than he repeated; there being no Witnesses on either Side.

Ver. 24. *And the king said, Bring me a sword: and they brought a sword to him.*] As much as to say, here is nothing but affirming on one Part, and denying on the other, without any Proof: I must therefore try some other Way to decide this Controversy.

Ver. 25. *And the king said, Divide the living child in two, and give half to the one, and half to the other.*] For both pretended to it, and this he thought the best Way to end the Dispute. For he knew the Woman, whose the Child really was, would be moved with such tender Compassion to it, that she would never suffer it to be divided: And so he should discover the true Mother. Thus Interpreters commonly expound it. But *Abarbinel* thinks this would have been no extraordinary Proof of *Solomon's* Wisdom above other Mens; nor have begot such a Fear in the *Israelites* as this Judgment did. Therefore he thinks *Solomon* made a Discovery of the Truth, antecedent to this Experiment; by observing the Countenance, the manner of Speech, and all the Motions of the Women, whereby he discerned the Secrets of their Hearts, and penetrated to the Bottom of the Business; which this Command to divide the Child discovered to all.

Ver. 26. *Then spake the woman whose the living child was, unto the king (for her bowels yearned upon her child) and she said, O my Lord, give her the living child, and in no wise slay it: but the other said, Let it be neither mine nor thine, but divide it.*] Natural Affection clearly discovered the Truth, without any other Evidence.

Ver. 27. *Then the king said, Give her the child, and in no wise slay it: for she is the mother of it.*] As appeared by the Pity which her Love excited to it.

Ver. 28. *And all Israel heard of the judgment which the king had judged, and they feared the king,*] Very much revered, and stood in Awe of him.

*For they saw that the wisdom of God was in him, to do judgment:*] That is, saith *Abarbinel*, the Wisdom proper to God; which searches the Reins, and trieth the Hearts. Therefore they feared him, perswading themselves, they could not have a Thought of any evil Design against him, which he would not discover.

#### C H A P. IV.

Verse 1. *S*O king *Solomon* was king over all *Israel*.] Reigned with the full Consent of all the Tribes of *Israel*.

Ver. 2. *And these are the princes which he had,*] The principal Officers imployed under him.

*Azariah the son of Zadok the priest:*] He was the Son of *Abimaaz* the Son of *Zadok*; and therefore was *Zadok's* Grandson, 1 *Chron.* vi. 8, 9. But such are usually called Sons in Scripture, as *Rasi* observes upon *Gen.* xx. 12. And *Zadok*; it is probable, in his old Age, bred him up in his House, as his Child. It is not said here what Office he had, unless we translate the Word *Priest*, as we do in the Margin, chief Officer, or prime Minister of State. But this *Abarbinel* thinks is a Mistake, and he takes him to have been one of the Scribes, together with those two that follow in the next Words, *Eliboreph*, and *Abiah*. For thus he thinks the Words should be translated, *Azariah the son of Zadok the priest, and Eliboreph, and Abiah the son of Shisba were scribes*; there wanting a *Vau* before *Eliboreph*, as is frequent in Scripture, *Exod.* i. 1, 2. And these three Secretaries had each their several Employments. One, he thinks, was in Matters of Judgment, the other in the Revenue, and the third was concerned in writing Annals, keeping the Records, and a publick Register.

Ver. 3. *Eliboreph and Abiah, the sons of Shisba, scribes: Jehoshaphat the son of Abilud, the recorder.*] Or Master of Requests. So *Rasi* understands the Word *Hammasker*: One that heard all Mens Causes, and brought them before the King.

Ver. 4. *And Benaiah the son of Jehoiada was over the host: and Zadok and Abiathar were the priests.*] That is, the Principal, or High Priests. *Kimchi* thinks this was not that *Abiathar* whom *Solomon* ejected, and placed *Zadok* in his Room (ii. 35.) but another of that Name. But *Rabag* takes him to be the same that was thrust out of the Priesthood; yet suffered to minister, when *Zadok* was not well, or could not attend: And *Abarbinel* approves of this Opinion. Or, perhaps, *Solomon* permitted him, upon his Petition, to come to *Jerusalem*, not to officiate as High-priest, but to live upon the Altar (according to the Prediction, 1 *Sam.* ii. 36.) and he retained the Name and Title of High-priest, though *Zadok* only enjoyed the Office. *L'Empereur* thinks he is here joined with *Zadok*, because in the Beginning of *Solomon's* Reign he did discharge the Office of High-priest: And after he was deposed he retained the Title of that Dignity as long as he lived, because of his precedent Function. *Annot.* upon *Bertram de Rep. Jud.* p. 420.

V. 5. *And Azariah the son of Nathan was over the Officers:*] That is, the twelve Officers mentioned below, ver. 7, 8, &c. who gave Accounts unto him, who was their Overseer.

*And Zabud the son of Nathan was principal officer, and the king's friend.*] The Word *Cohen* signifies here, as it doth 2 *Sam.* viii. 18. Minister of state, among whom *Zabud* was the chief: One whom the King intrusted with the Management of all Affairs, and with his most secret Counsels; he being always with him, as *Abarbinel* observes. Dr *Hammond* notes upon St *Matthew* ix. Annot. 2. that the King's Friend was an Officer of Nearness to the King: As Mr *Selden* observed before him in his *Uxor. Hebr.* Lib. 2. Chap 16. p. 201, 202. For *Nathan* having bred up



up *Solomon* (see 2 *Sam.* xii. 25.) it was easy for him to get his Sons preferred by him to the highest Dignities under him, when he came to be King: Especially since he was very instrumental in placing him upon the Throne.

Ver. 6. *And Abisbar was over the household:]* Lord High Chamberlain (as we speak in our Language) who took in, and displaced Officers in the Family.

*And Adoniram the son of Abda was over the tribute.]* Which was imposed on the People, for the Support of the Government. Such Contributions were raised several Ways in several Kingdoms: But good and wise Princes took Care not to lay Burdens on such things as were necessary for the Livelihood of the Poor; and that they were not too heavy upon any thing: As *Solomon's* were, if the Peoples Complaints were just, after his Death: But perhaps this Word *Tribute*, which we translate *levy* in the Margin, may refer not to the levying of Money, but of Men. Concerning which we read in the next Chapter, ver. 13, 14. where *Adoniram* is said to be over the Levy: And so he might be over both, of Men and Money.

Ver. 7. *And Solomon had twelve officers over all Israel, which provided victuals for the king and his household: Each man in his month made provision.]* The Country being divided into twelve Parts, there were so many Persons (called *Nitzavium*, because there they were placed) constituted to buy Provisions for the King and his Family; at the best Hand, and every thing in its proper Season: To be sent to the Place where the King resided, by every one in his Month. By which means there was great Plenty for all that belonged to the Court; both for his House, and his Stables of Horses; for Domesticks, and for all Foreigners that came thither about Business, or to hear his Wisdom: Who were there entertained without any Grievance to his People.

Ver. 8. *And these are their names: The son of Hur,]* He tells only the Name of the Father, who it seems was more illustrious than the Son: Unless we translate these Words, *Ben-hur*.

*In Mount Ephraim.]* And the Territory belonging to it: Which must be understood of the rest of the Places mentioned in the following Verses.

Ver. 9. *The son of Dekar,]* Or *Ben-Dekar*, as those that follow may be translated: Though it is probable, as I said before, that the Fathers are named, not the Sons; because they were very illustrious Persons, and better known: Who managed perhaps this Affair by their Sons.

*In Makaz, and in Shaalbim, and Bethshemesh, and Elon-beth-hanan.]* It is not material in what Country these places were; and therefore I shall not enquire after them.

Ver. 10. *The son of Hefed, in Aruboth: To him pertained Sochoh, and all the land of Hepher.]* There were more *Sochohs* than one, as we find *Josh.* vi. 35, 48. It is uncertain which are here meant. The Land of *Hepher* possibly may be the Portion given to the Daughters of *Hepher*, *Josh.* xvii. 3, &c.

Ver. 11. *The son of Abinadab, in all the region of Dor, which had Taphath the daughter of Solomon to wife.]* *Solomon* had no Daughters mar-

riageable when these Officers were made: But in Process of Time this Man, and *Abimaaz* mentioned ver. 15. had behaved themselves so well in their Office, that *Solomon* did them the Honour to give them two of his Daughters to be their Wives.

Ver. 12. *Baanah the son of Abilud, to him pertained Taanach and Megiddo, and all Bethshean, which is by Zartanah beneath Jezreel, from Bethshean to Abel-meholah, even unto the place that is beyond Jockneam,]* These Places have been named in the foregoing Books: Where I have noted as much as I can find about them. Here the Author names the Person himself that was employed (as he doth in some of the following Verses) and not merely the Father. The Reason of which I cannot give, unless it were that he was a very noted Person.

Ver. 13. *The son of Geber in Ramoth-Gilead: to him pertained the towns of Jair the son of Manasseh, which are in Gilead: to him also pertained the region of Argob, which is in Bashan, threescore great cities with walls, and brazen bars.]* These Countries beyond *Jordan* are also well known, being often mentioned in the foregoing Books.

Ver. 14. *Abinadab the son of Iddo had Mahanaim.]* And the Territory belonging to it, which was very fertile: But this seems to some not to bear proportion to the rest, being not a twelfth Part of the whole Country. Therefore they follow the marginal Translation to *Mahanaim*: That is, all the Territory from the Places before-named unto this Place.

Ver. 15. *Abimaaz was in Naphthali; he also took Basmath the daughter of Solomon to wife.]* As *Abinadab* had married another of his Daughters, see ver. 11.

Ver. 16. *Baanah the son of Hushai was in Asher and in Aloth.]* This Man perhaps was the Son of *Hushai* the Friend of *David*; and therefore preferred by *Solomon*.

Ver. 17. *Jehoshaphat the son of Parvab in Issachar.]* It appears by this, and the foregoing and following Verse, that some of these Officers had whole Tribes assigned them for their Province.

Ver. 18. *Shimei the son of Elab in Benjamin.]* Concerning this Person, see Chap. i. ver. 8.

Ver. 19. *Gebar the son of Uri was in the country of Gilead, in the country of Sihon king of the Amorites, and of Og king of Bashan;]* That is, in the rest of the Country of *Gilead* before mentioned, ver. 13.

*And he was the only officer which was in the land.]* There is nothing in the *Hebrew* answering to those Words *he was*: Therefore this doth not relate to the Officer before mentioned; but the Meaning is, as *Abarbinel* expounds it, that besides all those Officers before named, there was another who took Care of Strangers, who were going to Court, or coming from it: As the other twelve took Care of his Family, and all belonging to it. This Officer made Provision in that Country where the King then dwelt; and therefore is not named, because he was not fixed and settled in his Office, as the other were; but chosen by the Citizens of that City, where the King resided.

Ver. 20. *And Judah and Israel were many, as the sand which is by the sea in multitude,]* The same



same *Abarbinel* thinks this and the next Verses explain the Reason why this Officer was appointed: *First*, because *Israel* and *Judah* were so great a People; and *Secondly*, because Strangers came from several Regions, to bring Presents, or about other Business. And therefore it was necessary this Officer should set a reasonable Price upon all things sold in the Market; that they might not exact upon any body, when they saw a Multitude of Buyers, which might tempt them to sell their Commodities too dear.

*Eating and drinking, and making merry.*] In perfect Security; and being well pleased and highly satisfied.

Ver. 21. *And Solomon reigned over all kingdoms, from the river to the land of the Philistines, and unto the border of Egypt:]* The Bounds of his Kingdom were *Euphrates* on the East, the Country of the *Philistines* on the West, and *Egypt* on the South. For so God promised that their Dominion should be extended, *from the river of Egypt to the great river, the river Euphrates*, Gen. xv. 18. And accordingly *David* conquered so far, and *Solomon* maintained his Conquests.

*They brought presents, and served Solomon all the days of his life.*] This explains what went before: Which is not to be understood as if all those Countries had no other King than *Solomon*; but that their Kings were Tributaries to him, and made him Presents in token of their Subjection.

Ver. 22. *And Solomon's provision for one day, was thirty measures of fine flour, and sixty measures of meal,*] By *Meal* is meant a coarser sort of Flour for inferior Servants: And the Measure here spoken of contained ten *Ephabs*. So here was Bread enough provided for near three thousand Persons, as some compute it.

Ver. 23. *Ten fat oxen, and twenty oxen out of the pastures, and an hundred sheep,*] This and the foregoing Verse *Abarbinel* thinks is added, to satisfy some Questions that arise about the Constitution of so many Officers: For why might he not be supplied out of the Neighbouring Cities and Towns? Which he shews here could not be; because of the vast Quantity of Provision which was necessary for one Day. And it is observable, that *Oxen* are here mentioned in the first Place (both those fatted at Home, and those fatted in the Pastures) being anciently esteemed the most noble Meat: As appears by *Homer's* Heroes. Who, as *Dioscorides* notes, never had any thing in their Feasts, no not at Marriages, but fat Oxen. See *Bochartus* in his *Hieroicoicon*, P. 1 Lib. 2. Cap. 32. where he mentions the great Entertainments made by *Agamemnon*, *Menelaus*, *Nestor*, *Alcinous*. Nor did they that courted *Penelope*, though the most voluptuous of all Men, eat any other Meat.

*Besides harts, and roe-bucks, and fallow deer,*] Which were Meats highly esteemed among the *Jews*, and mentioned next to the foregoing, Deut. xiv. 4, 5.

*And fatted fowl.*] Many restrain the Word *Barburim* to Birds, or Fowl, as we do: And some think they were *Capons*: *Kimchi* and others say, fatted Fowl out of *Barbary*; from

whence they had the Name of *Barburim*. But the Name of *Barbary* was not known in *Solomon's* Time: And therefore *Bochart* thinks the Word should be translated, *the choicest of all fatted things*, Hieroz. P. 2. Lib. 1. Cap. 19. and so *Goussset* in his late *Commentaries of the Hebrew Tongue*.

Ver. 24. *And he had dominion over all the regions on this side the river,*] It might be objected to what was said before, that all the Country of *Israel* could not afford such a constant Supply of Provisions: Which he prevents by this Observation, that his Dominion extended to a great many other Regions, from whence they might be furnished with more than his own Country afforded.

*From Tiphshab even unto Azzah, over all the kings on this side the river:]* This is an Explication of what is said ver. 21. that he reigned from the River, that is *Euphrates*, to the Land of the *Philistines*: For *Tiphshab* is the same with the City *Tapsaeus*; where there was a Bridge, and a Ferry over *Euphrates*, as *Strabo* testifies in many Places (see Lib. 16. p. 747.) and the very Name implies as much, for *תפס* is *transire*, to pass over, in the Hebrew Language.

*And he had peace on all sides round about him.*] None of his Neighbours gave him any Disturbance: So that the *Israelites* had nothing to divert them (as *Abarbinel* observes) from improving their Lands, and increasing their Rents; whereby there was a greater Plenty of all things. *Machiavel* magnifies those who by Force of Arms achieved mighty things, and raised themselves to a great Height of Glory: But *Hermannus Conringius* well corrects him with this Observation, that *Solomon* among the *Jews*, and *Numa Pompilius* among the *Romans*, got a more lasting Name in all future Age by the Art of Peace. For which he refers to *Cicero*, L. 2. de Officiis.

Ver. 25. *And Judah and Israel dwelt safely, every man under his vine, and under his fig-tree, from Dan even to Beersheba,*] This he saith (the same Author thinks) to shew the great Plenty of Corn and Wine and Oil, as well as of Cattle and all other things: *Vines* and *Fig-trees* are particularly mentioned; because they were planted in *Judaea* more than any other Trees: For the Sweetness of their Fruit, and the Benefits of their Shade.

*All the days of Solomon.*] That is, 'till the End of his Life. When some Adversaries were stirred up against him: But for so short a Time, in his old Age, that he had Peace the far greater part of his Reign, 1 Chron. xxii. 9.

Ver. 26. *And Solomon had forty thousand stalls of horses for his chariots,*] In 2 Chron. ix. 25. it is said he had but four thousand. But there is no Disagreement between these two Places: For he speaks here of his Horses, and there of their Stall or Stables; there being ten in every Stable, which make forty thousand, as *Abarbinel* observes. But this doth not satisfy *Bochartus*, who rather inclines to *Jacobus Capellus's* Opinion, that the Hebrew Word *Arbaim* here signifies four not forty, Hierozoicon, Lib. 2. Pars 1. p. 155, &c. But this is without Example, therefore others think that in the *Chronicles* the Author speaks of those Stalls for Horses



Horses which he had in *Jerusalem* for his constant Guard, which were but four thousand: Whereas here he speaks of those which were dispersed throughout his whole Kingdom.

*And twelve thousand horsemen.]* Which were distributed, it is likely, in every Tribe; to keep them in Peace, and to be ready to oppose any Enemy that might invade them: Wherein *Abarbinel* thinks that *Solomon* did not offend against the Law in *Deuteronomy*, which commanded them not to multiply Horses (xvii. 16.) because he did it not out of Pride and Vanity; but to preserve Peace, by keeping all his Neighbours in Awe. And he professes not to trust in them, *Prov.* xxi. 31.

*Ver. 27. These officers provided victuals for king Solomon, and for all that came to king Solomon's table, every man in his month: they lacked nothing.]* This is repeated, to shew their Diligence, Exactness, and Care, which was remarkable: Especially since they took Care of his Stable, as well as of his Household, as it follows in the next Verse.

*Ver. 28. Barley also and straw]* Barley was anciently Horse Corn, as appears by many Places in *Homer*; which *Bochartus* hath observed in his *Hierozyicon*, P. 1. Lib. 2. Cap. 9.

*For the horses and dromedaries]* The Hebrew Word *Rechesb* signifies swift Horses, as *Abarbinel* thinks. See *Ester* viii. 14. But others take them for Mules, as we translate it in the Margin. *Bochartus* thinks it certain, that this Word imports a kind of Horse, *Micah* i. 13. See *Hieroz.* P. 1. Lib. 2. Cap. 6. & 21.

*Brought they unto the place where the officers were,]* Or rather, *where the Beasts were.* For there is no Word for Officers in the Hebrew.

*Every man according to his charge.]* Which lasted for a Month, every Year.

*Ver. 29. And God gave Solomon wisdom and understanding, exceeding much,]* Knowledge of all manner of Things; and Prudence in the Administration of the Government.

*And largeness of heart,]* A Mind very comprehensive of all sort of Knowledge; and an Heart to do a vast deal of Good.

*Even as the sand that is on the sea-shore.]* As the Sand there incloses a vast Body of Waters; so his Mind contained an Ocean of Knowledge, as the Lord *Bacon* somewhere speaks.

*Ver. 30. And Solomon's wisdom excelled the wisdom of all the children of the east country,]* Some, by these Eastern Sages understand the *Chaldeans*: Who were rather a Northern People, as *Jeremiah* describes them (i. 14.) and were not famous for Learning in *Solomon's* Time; nor began to be so 'till the Reign of *Nabonassar*: Nor are the *Tyrians* here meant, as *Pineda* imagines; for they were a Western People: But the Oriental *Arabians*; who were famous for Wisdom in antient Times, as appears by the Book of *Job*. And in After-ages *Porphyry* reports (as *St Cyril* tells us, *Lib.* 10. *contra Julianum*) that *Pythagoras* travelled into this Country, to improve himself in Learning: Where were many of those wise Men called *Magi*, as well as among the *Persians*. Thus *Conringius* in his *Supplementum* 5. ad *L. de Antiq. Academicis*. But after all, *Abarbinel* takes the Word *Kedem* not to signify *East*, but *antient*

*Time.* And so the *Children of Keden* are those who were born in the Days of Old: When Men lived some Hundreds of Years; and so improved themselves in Knowledge (especially in Astronomical Learning) far more than it was possible for Men to do, after their Lives became very short. This makes our Wisdom defective, as was observed by *Hippocrates* in his Aphorisms, *Art is long, and Life is short.* But *Solomon*, by a special Gift of God, was more knowing than they who lived above ten Times as long as he did. But this is a forced Sense, as appears by the next Words, concerning *Egypt*.

*And all the wisdom of Egypt.]* Which Country was celebrated for Wisdom in *Moses's* Time, as appears from *Acts* vii. 22. and in after-times *Macrobius* calls *Egypt*, *Matrem Artium*, the Mother of Arts. But it was famous especially for the Knowledge of the Motions of the Heavenly Bodies: For he saith (*Lib.* 1. *Saturnal.* Cap. 15.) *Primos omnium Caelis scrutari, & metiri ausos fuisse*; that they were the first who attempted to search and measure the Heavens: For which the great Serenity of their Air gave them Opportunity. As for their Civil Prudence, it is sufficiently indicated in the Words of *Isaiah*, xix. 11.

*Ver. 31. And he was wiser than all men;]* Of that Age wherein he lived. But some extend this to all Men that were before him, or should come after him. For in *Midrasch Kobeletb* (upon *Ecclesiastes* vii. 24.) they thus gloss, *Wiser than Col Adam*, all Men (this is the first *Adam*), and than *Ethan* (this is *Abraham*), and than *Heman* (this is *Moses*). But *Maimonides* discreetly confines the Words to the Men of that Age, whom he mentions, *Ethan*, *Heman*, &c. and will by no Means allow him to have been wiser than *Moses*. See *Mere Nevochim*, Pars 3. Cap. 4.

*Than Ethan the Ezraite, than Heman, and Chalcol, and Darda,]* If these were the Sons of *Zerah* the Son of *Judab*, mentioned 1 *Chron.* ii. 6. then it is not true that *Solomon* is compared only with the wise Men of his Age: For these lived long before him. And the two former are thought to have been endued with the Spirit of Prophecy, being the Authors, as some think, of two *Psalms*. For *Psalms* lxxxviii is said to be an instructive Psalm of *Heman the Ezraite*, and the next (lxxxix) of *Ethan the Ezraite*. Of this Opinion is *Dr Lightfoot*. But it is more probable that other Men are here meant; for we read of *Heman* the Grand-child of *Samuel*, 1 *Chron.* vi. 33. who was also a Prophet, 1 *Chron.* xxv. 5. and in the same Time there was one *Ethan* a Levite of the Posterity of *Merari*, 1 *Chron.* vi. 46. who is joined with *Heman* and *Asaph* as principal Singers, 1 *Chron.* xv. 17. Now the forementioned *Psalms* may more reasonably be ascribed to them; there being express Mention of *David* and his Kingdom in one of them: and then *Solomon* is compared only with the wise Men of his own Time, and not with those that lived before *Moses*. They that think otherwise of these Men, were misled by the *Jews*, who would have some *Psalms* to have been composed before *David*. This they began to suppose (as a most learned Friend of mine, *Dr*



Dr *Alix*, hath observed to me) after the Times of the Apostles, as *Justin Martyr* affirms in his *Apology*, pag. 76.

*The sons of Mahol:]* This confutes those that make them the Sons of *Zerah*: Unless we suppose him to have had two Names, as it must be confessed was common among the *Jews*. And this last Name might be given him, because he was a skilful Musician: For *Mahol* signifies a *Pipe*.

*And his fame was in all nations round about.]* All the neighbouring Countries heard the Fame of his Wisdom.

Ver. 32. *And he spake three thousand proverbs:]* Being an excellent Moral Philosopher, as well as a Natural. St *Hierom* thinks these are those we read in the Book of the *Proverbs*, which doth not contain so many: But is more probable than what *Josephus* affirms, that he wrote three thousand Books of *Proverbs*: Which is an extravagant Conceit; for the Scripture mentions only three thousand *Proverbs*, many of which we must confess to have been lost, as other Compositions of his are.

*And his songs were a thousand and five.]* He was a great Poet also: For anciently wise Men were wont to give good Instructions in Songs; which made them to be more easily remembred. But none of these Compositions were thought to be divinely inspired, but only the *Song of Songs*: Which was therefore joined to the Sacred Books. The rest were not adapted to stir up a Sense of Piety; as the *Psalms* of *David* were: Who is therefore called the *Sweet Singer of Israel*, 2 *Sam.* xxiii. 1.

Ver. 33. *And he spake of trees, from the cedar tree that is in Lebanon, even unto the hyssop that springeth out of the wall:]* That is, of all sorts of Plants, from the greatest to the smallest. For *Ezub* (which we commonly translate *hyssop*) seems to be the same with the *Ethiopian* Word *Azub*, which signifies *Mint*; and is more agreeable to this Place, being more directly opposed to the Cedar than *Hyssop*: Which hath a Stalk, and sometimes of great Strength, as *de Dicu* and *Job Ludolphus* have observed. And for this Reason *Hottinger* (in his *Smegma Oriental.* p. 580.) takes it for the Wall-flower, which is less than *Hyssop*. But *Bochartus* maintains *Hyssop* to here meant; of which the *Jews* here reckoned four Sorts: And one of them may well be thought to grow upon Walls. Though there is no Necessity, he thinks, to put that Interpretation upon the Word *Bekir*, which we translate *on the Wall*: Which may signify, as the Particle *Beth* doth in many Places, *near or hard by* the Wall. Of *Jerusalem*, that is, which was encompassed with Mountains: And the *Arabians* observe that *Hyssop* grew in the Mountains, especially about *Jerusalem*. See *Hierozoi-con*, P. 1. Lib. 2. Cap. 50. From *Solomon's* great Skill in the Properties and Virtues of all Plants, *Nachmanides* makes bold to conclude that he wrote a Book of Medicine.

*And he spake also of beasts, and fowl, and creeping things, and fishes.]* This shews the Vastness of his Learning: Which comprehended the whole History of Animals, as well as of Plants; whose Nature and Qualities he understood. Some *Jews* fancy that *Ari-*

*stotle* saw these Books, and published them in his own Name, in his *Historia Animalium*. It is a Rule given by those who write Books of *Civil Prudence*, that they who apply themselves to the Management of publick Affairs, should not follow other Studies: Which by their Delight may draw their Minds too much from Business: But *Solomon* had so vast a Genius, that he pursued all manner of Knowledge, while he governed his Kingdom with great Prudence. For he composed a great Number of Songs, and discoursed of all sorts of Creatures, both in the Sea and in the Land: Which belonged to contemplative, not to practical Studies. So that in his Days the Wish of *Plato* was fulfilled, that *either Philosophers might be Kings, or Kings be Philosophers*.

Ver. 34. *And there came of all people to hear the wisdom of Solomon, from all kings of the earth, which had heard of his wisdom.]* It is a Conceit of *Kimchi* that Kings came from all Parts of the Countries round about, to hear his Wisdom: And their People, when they returned, came to their Kings to learn what *Solomon* had said. But this is not the literal Sense of the Words; nor is it probable that any but the Queen of *Sheba*, came in Person to hear his Wisdom: For they would have been mentioned, as she is. Therefore the plain Meaning is, that People came from all the neighbouring Nations, being sent by their Kings, who heard of his Fame: Nay, their own natural Desires might carry them to him. For as *Dion Pruseus* observes (*Orat. de Regno*, p. 6.) there is no Spectacle so grateful, as a wise and good King. All Men flock to see him, and partake, τὴς καλῆς διαγωγῆς καὶ ἀγαθῆς, of his good and pious Mind. Especially if he be mild and gentle, there is no Spectacle so sweet and lovely: Insomuch that they who see him, are loth to leave him (as he speaks a little before) and they that hear him, ἐπισυρῶσιν ἰδεῖν, &c. are desirous to see him, more than Children are to find their unknown Father.

## CHAP. V.

Verse 1. *AND Hiram king of Tyre sent his servants unto king Solomon:]* That is, he sent Embassadors to condole with King *Solomon* the Death of his Father (as the manner was) and to congratulate his Accession to the Throne. *Eupolemus* calls this King *Suron* (as he is called *Hiram* in the Book of the *Chronicles*) and makes mention of those Letters which were sent by these Embassadors. See *Eusebius* in his *Præpar. Evang.* Lib. 9. Cap. 33, 34.

(*For he had heard that they had anointed him king in the room of his father*) for *Hiram* was ever a lover of *David*.] And therefore was desirous to continue in Friendship with his Son.

Ver. 2. *And Solomon sent to Hiram, saying,]* There were three Embassies passed between them, as *Abarbinel* observes: For *Hiram* began, and *Solomon* returned it; and then *Hiram* sent to him again, ver. 8. But two only are mentioned in the Book of the *Chronicles*, 2. ii. 3, 11. For *Ezra* there (as he observes) minded only what concerned the building of the Temple: And



And so omitted the first Embassy, which was no more than a Compliment.

Ver. 3. *Thou knowest how that David my father could not build an house to the name of the LORD his God, for the wars which were about him on every side, until the LORD put them under the soles of his feet.*] This was one Reason; but not the chief: For God commanded him to desist, when he had it in Design.

Ver. 4. *And now the LORD my God hath given me rest on every side, so that there is neither adversary, nor evil occurrent.*] Nothing to make him fear any Disturbance.

Ver. 5. *And behold, I purpose to build an house unto the name of the LORD my God,*] For his Worship and Service.

*As the LORD spake unto David my father, saying, Thy son, whom I will set upon thy throne in thy room, he shall build an house unto my name.*] This he spake by the Prophet Nathan, 2 Sam. vii. 13.

Ver. 6. *Now therefore command them,*] That is, his Servants who were skilled in such Work.

*To hew me cedar trees*] Which were the most firm and durable, as well as most fragrant of all other.

*Out of Lebanon,*] Which was, if not all, yet a great Part of it within the Dominion of Solomon. Who therefore doth not ask Trees of him which were his own; but only that his Servants should hew and prepare them for his Use, which they understood better than the Israelites.

*And my servants shall be with thy servants:*] To assist them, as they should be directed by them; and to receive the Timber from them, and convey it to Solomon, when it was prepared.

*And unto thee will I give hire for thy servants, according to all that thou shalt appoint:*] Pay them what Wages they pleased to demand for their Work.

*For thou knowest there is not among us any that can skill to hew timber like the Sidonians.*] Both Tyre and Sidon were now under one and the same King: And both of them very ingenious in Mechanics: Especially the Sidonians: Whom Homer calls πολυτεχνες, excellent Artists in divers Things: For he ascribes to them all the neater sort of Work, both in his *Iliads* and his *Odyssey*, as Bochartus observes in his *Phaleg. Lib. 4. Cap. 35.* By which Arts they grew very rich, in a Time of long Peace, which they enjoyed, as we learn from *Judges xviii. 7.* where the Sidonians are made the Example of those that lived very securely. But as for the Israelites they did not mind Manufactures, but applied themselves wholly to Agriculture and feeding of Cattle. There had been most admirable Workmen among them, who knew how to cut and engrave precious Stones, to cast and work up Metals, &c. but this was before they came into the Land of Canaan, in the Time of Moses, when Bezaleel and Aholiab excelled in many different Arts, which were necessary for the Work of the Tabernacle. But the Scripture acquaints us, that they had their Skill by Inspiration from God; and it doth not appear that they had any Successors: So that in the Time of Solomon there were no professed Arti-

ficers who could undertake the Work of the Temple.

Ver. 7. *And it came to pass, that when Hiram heard the words of Solomon, he rejoiced greatly,*] Which demonstrates a more than ordinary Friendship which he had for King David and the People of Israel.

*And said, Blessed be the LORD this day, which hath given unto David a wise son over this great people.*] If he was not become a Profelyte to the Jews Religion (which one would have expected should have been recorded if he had) yet he had a great Veneration for the God of Israel, who was properly called the LORD: And it is likely, he worshipped him together with his own God.

Ver. 8. *And Hiram sent to Solomon, saying, I have considered the things which thou sentest to me for: and I will do all thy desire concerning timber of cedar, and concerning timber of fir.*] The Word which we translate Fir, others think signifies Pine or Cypress. For Fir seems not so fit for this Work, being a light Wood, and not durable, and apt to take Fire. Their Conjecture is most reasonable, who think it was a kind of Cedar: And therefore comprehended under that Name, ver. 6. where Solomon desires of him only, that his Servants might hew him Cedar-trees.

Ver. 9. *My servants shall bring them down from Lebanon unto the sea:*] The Mediterranean Sea; in which his City stood.

*And I will convey them by sea in flotes,*] Some think they were tied together, and drawn in the Water by Vessels; as the manner now frequently is: But they wanted not Vessels wherein to convey them; for Diodorus Siculus saith, (Lib. 6.) that Sidon had in his Time, τετρίπαις καὶ πεντήπαις πλείους τῶν ἑξαπαις, more than an hundred Three Oar and Five Oar Vessels belonging to it: And that City was but two thousand Furlongs from Tyre, as Strabo saith.

*Unto the place that thou shalt appoint me,*] Which was at Joppa: A famous Sea-port in the Country of Israel, 2 Chron. ii. 16.

*And will cause them to be discharged there, and thou shalt receive them:*] When they were landed in that Place.

*And thou shalt accomplish my desire, in giving food for my household.*] For living in barren Islands, they wanted Corn; though they had Plenty of Money; being great Merchants. And in after-times it appears, they were supported by Provisions from Judea, Acts xii. 20.

Ver. 10. *And Hiram gave Solomon cedar-trees, and fir-trees, according to all his desire.*] That is, he agreed to give him all that he desired: But the Trees were not yet cut down and prepared.

Ver. 11. *And Solomon gave Hiram twenty thousand measures of wheat for food to his household, and twenty measures of pure oil:*] In 2 Chron. ii. 10. it is said twenty thousand Baths of Oil. How Corim and Bathim differ I shall not examine; but that Place in the Chronicles plainly speaks of what was given to the Workmen, who had other things besides (there mentioned) to support them in their Labours: But here the Prophet speaks of what was given for the Use of Hiram's Family, as Kimchi and Ralbag solve this seeming Contradiction. Abarbinel hath another Solution.



Solution. See Buxtorf, his *Vindiciæ Hebr. Veritatis*, Pars 2. Cap. 2. pag. 424.

*Thus gave Solomon to Hiram year by year.] During their Lives.*

Ver. 12. *And the LORD gave Solomon wisdom, as he promised:] His Wisdom appeared more and more, in all his Transactions.*

*And there was peace between Hiram and Solomon, and they two made a league together.] It was lawful in ancient Times, before the Law of Moses was given, to make Leagues with Strangers to their Religion, for their mutual Benefit: As appears by the Story of Jacob and Laban; Isaac and Abimelech (though some doubt whether he was an Idolater) and the Law of Moses made no Alteration, as Grotius observes, Lib. 2. de Jure Belli & Pacis, Cap. 16. Sect. 9. If Hiram therefore worshipped other Gods, Solomon might notwithstanding make a League with him (inasmuch that Hiram calls him Brother, ix. 13.) he being none of the seven Nations of Canaan.*

Ver. 13. *And king Solomon raised a levy out of all Israel; and the levy was thirty thousand men.] To cut down the Trees, which Hiram's Servants were to hew.*

Ver. 14. *And sent them to Lebanon, ten thousand a month by courses: a month they were in Lebanon, and two months at home:] That they might not be tired with their Labour; nor neglect their own Families, while they were employed abroad.*

*And Adoniram was over the levy.] Took Care to raise them, and to see them disposed according to Solomon's Order. See iv. 6.*

Ver. 15. *And Solomon had threescore and ten thousand that bare burdens,] Viz. Porters, Carters, Seamen, and such like.*

*And fourscore thousand that were hewers in the mountains:] That is, Hewers of Stone, for Timber was hewed by Hiram's Servants in Lebanon. And these hundred and fifty Thousand were not Israelites, as the thirty Thousand before-mentioned were; but Strangers of other Nations, as may be gathered from ix. 21, 22. It may seem strange to some, that so many Men should be employed about the Building of so small a Place, as the Temple was: But they must consider that there were many other Works besides, which Solomon designed, and which he finished (ix. 15.) for which we read of no other Preparations of Materials, but what was now made.*

Ver. 16. *Besides the chief of Solomon's officers which were over the work, three thousand and three hundred which ruled over the people that wrought in the work.] In 2 Chron. ii. 18. they are said to have been three Thousand and six Hundred: For three Hundred were Overseers even of the three Thousand three Hundred, who were to oversee the rest. That is, superior Officers, who surveyed the whole, as Kimchi observes. Or, as Abarbinel takes it, there were three hundred Supernumeraries, who were employed in the more exquisite sort of Work: or when any of the other failed, were ready to supply their Places.*

Ver. 17. *And the king commanded, and they brought great stones, costly stones, and hewed stones, to lay the foundation of the house.] All Things being now prepared, Solomon himself seems to have been present at the laying of the Foundation*

of the House; which was not only very strong, but also very magnificent. For he caused Stones of great Bigness to be laid for the Foundation, and some of great Price (such as Marble, some think. See vii. 10.) and those also hewn and polished, not rough; that they might lie more regularly and even: Which shews the Nobleness of his Mind, in making that which was not exposed to open View, suitable to that which was seen.

Ver. 18. *And Solomon's builders and Hiram's builders did hew them,] It seems Solomon's Servants learned of Hiram's; or at least were directed by them to assist in the Work.*

*And the stone-squarers:] Or the Gibbites, as it is in the Margin, who are mentioned in Josh. xiii. 5. being Phœnicians, Inhabitants of Gabala, a Promontory mentioned by Pliny, (See Psal. lxxxiii. 7.) who were the most excellent Artists in those Parts.*

*So they prepared timber and stones to build the house.] Made all ready not only to lay the Foundation, but to build the House.*

## CHAP. VI.

Verse 1. **A**ND it came to pass in the four hundred and fourscore year, after the children of Israel were come out of the land of Egypt,] These Years are variously computed by the Jewish Doctors; with which I shall not trouble the Reader: But only observe, that they are plainly divided into two Intervals, by the Words of Jephthah to the Ammonites, Judges xi. 26. where he tells them the Israelites had dwelt in the Land of Canaan three hundred Years: Unto which if we add the forty Years wherein they wandered in the Wilderness, there were three hundred and forty Years past at that Time, since they came out of Egypt. And so the other Interval from thence unto the Building of the Temple, was an hundred and forty Years: Which is not hard to make out according to Sir John Marsham's Computation. See my Annotations on that Place of the Book of Judges.

*In the fourth year of Solomon's reign over Israel,] But why did he not begin the Work sooner, according to the Command of his Father David, who left him all Things necessary, Gold, Silver, Brasses, &c. for the Building of it; and also a Draught of it: So that he might have begun when he began to reign? To which Abarbinel answers, that Solomon would not make use of what his Father had prepared, but resolved to build the House at his own Cost and Charge; and put into the Treasury of the LORD's House that which David had dedicated to this Work, vii. 51. And therefore he stood in need of four Years Time, to gather so much Gold and Silver as was necessary to defray the Charges of this Work.*

*In the month Zif, which is the second month that he began to build the house of the LORD.] Either to lay the Foundation of it, or to build upon the Foundation before-mentioned.*

Ver. 2. *And the house which king Solomon built for the LORD,] For his Worship and Service: And wherein his Divine Presence might dwell among them, ver. 13.*



*The length of it was sixty cubits,]* Forty of which belonged to the Holy Place; and twenty to the most Holy.

*And the breadth thereof twenty cubits, and the height thereof thirty cubits.]* The Length and Breadth of it was twice as big (*Abarbinel* and others observe) as the Tabernacle of *Moses*: Which was in Length but thirty Cubits, and in Breadth but ten. Whereas the Temple was twenty Cubits wide through the whole, and sixty long: Besides the Porch. When it is said the Height was thirty Cubits; it must be understood of the Holy Place: For the Holy of Holies was only twenty. See *ver. 20.* And so the Height of the Holy Place was three times more than it was in the Tabernacle: For his Temple was to resemble an high Tower; having Chambers above it, in three Stories one above another, as the *Jewish Doctors* observe. See *1 Chron. xxviii. 11.*

*Ver. 3. And the porch before the Temple of the house, twenty cubits was the length thereof, according to the breadth of the house; and ten cubits was the breadth thereof, before the house.]* He gives no Account of the Height of it: But in *2 Chron. iii. 4.* *Ezra* seems to say, it was an hundred and twenty cubits. Which Words *Kimchi* imagines relate to the Porch alone: But *Abarbinel* wonders how this could come into his Head; when this Height belongs to the whole House. For if it belonged only to the Porch, then nothing is there said of the House it self: And besides, it immediately follows that he overlaid it with pure Gold. Which is not true of the Porch (for that was not overlaid with Gold) but only of the House of God. Which from the Foundation to the Covering of it, was thirty Cubits high; and above that Covering were three Stories of Chambers, which were ninety Cubits: and so in all the Height of the House was an hundred and twenty.

*Ver. 4. And for the house he made windows of narrow lights.]* Or, as it is in the Margin, *broad within and narrow without.* By which Means the House was better secured from the Weather; and yet had Lights enough. See *Casaubon* upon *Athenæus*, p. 363. where he observes the *Greeks* call such Windows *ροζινὰς*, *fenestras longas & angustas*, *ad emittenda tela*, *quàm ad lucem admittendum factas*, long, and narrow Windows made to shoot out Weapons, than to let in Light. And he translates these *Hebrew Words*, *fenestras*, *prospectus clausas*, viz. from the outward Part.

*Ver. 5. And against the wall of the house]* Or, *joyning to it*, it is in the Margin: For the Beams were not fastened in the Walls of the House, as we read in the next Verse; but a wooden Wall, some think, went round the House, unto which these Chambers were fastened.

*He built chambers round about against the walls of the house round about, both of the temple and of the oracle:]* But not of the Porch where the Entrance into the House was. It appears out of *Ezekiel* and *Josephus*, as *Peter Martyr* observes, that there were Twelve of these Chambers on the South-side, and as many on the North; and Six on the West.

*And he made chambers round about.]* In the *Hebrew*, he made *Ribs*: By which some un-

derstand Galleries. Which incompassed all the forenamed Chambers, as our Ribs do the Entrails of our Bodies. Without which there could not have been a convenient Passage to the several Chambers: Which were made to serve the Priests to lay their Garments in, and wherein they rested, and eat of the Sacrifices, and other Uses.

*Ver. 6. The nethermost chamber was five cubits broad, and the middle was six cubits broad, and the third was seven cubits broad:]* It appears by *ver. 10.* that they were but five Cubits high, and built over one another three Stories: Increasing in Breadth, every Story, one Cubit, by the Contrivance which follows.

*For without in the wall of the house he made narrowed rests round about,]* In the Margin we translate it, *Narrowings*, or *Rebatements*. By which seem to be meant that the Wall to which they were adjoined, was thicker below, and above narrower: So that there was more Space to make the upper Chambers wider.

*That the beams should not be fastened to the walls of the house.]* But in that outward Wall which I mentioned before, made of Wood: For he would have no Holes made in the Wall of the Temple. See *L'Empereur* upon *Codex Middoth*, p. 147, 148. and *Dr Lightfoot* of the Temple, p. 40.

*Ver. 7. And the house when it was in building, was built of stone, made ready before it was brought thither:]* So fitted for their several Uses and Places, that they might be joined together, without any other Labour, but putting them one by, or upon, another.

*So that there was neither hammer, nor ax, nor any tool of iron heard in the house, while it was in building.]* The Sense is plain, that the Stones were laid without any Noise; there being nothing to be done but to join them together. But the *Jews* are so foolish as to fancy, that they were not hewn nor plained by any Instrument before they came thither; but a Worm called *Samir*, which God created on purpose, did the Business: And that the Stones of their own Accord came to the Temple: And there the Angels laid them in their Place and Order. See *L'Empereur* upon *Codex Middoth*, p. 183. Which Fable arose from somebody that did not understand the Word *Samir*, which signifies a very hard Stone called *Smiris* (as *Bochartus* hath observed) with which Stones might be cut and polished as Diamonds are. See *Hiero-zoicon*, Par 2. Lib. 6. Cap. 11. An Emblem this was, as all Interpreters note, of that Peace and Quiet which should be in the Christian Church: Where all things should be done without Contention. *Utinam Deus hoc tandem aliquando elargiatur, ut omnes in domo suo idem dicamus & sentiamus*, as *P. Martyr* prays upon this Place.

*Ver. 8. The door of the middle chamber]* By which they were to go into the middle Row of Chambers.

*Was in the right side of the house:]* On the South-side, which in *Hebrew* is called the *right side*, because when Men look toward the East, the South is on their right Hand. Some think there was the like Door in the North; but it is more likely, that one Door served to carry them round to all the Chambers.

And



*And they went up with winding stairs into the middle chamber,]* That they might take up the less room.

*And out of the middle into the third.]* There was the like Pair of Stairs into the third Story.

Ver. 9. *So he built the house and finished it;]* That is, the Walls of the House.

*And also covered the house.]* He also covered the Top of it.

*With beams and boards of cedar.]* In the Margin, the *Vaultings and the Ceilings* of Cedar. That is, the Roof was an Arch within, which made it look more noble, though without it was flat.

Ver. 10. *And then he built chambers against all the house, five cubits high:]* The Word *then* is not in the *Hebrew*; and being omitted the Sense is plain, that he gives an Account of the Height of these Chambers, as before (ver. 6.) of the Breadth. But it is very briefly; and we are to understand that those below, and those in the middle, and those above, were every one of an equal Height, viz. five Cubits. So they were fifteen Cubits in all: Which was five less than the Height of the House, for that was twenty Cubits. Otherwise there would have been no room for the Windows: Which, I suppose, were above all these Chambers, in the top of the House.

Ver. 11. *And the word of the LORD came to Solomon, saying,]* By the Prophet *Abijah* the *Shilonite*, as the *Jews* say, in *Seder Olam Rabbah*, Cap. 20. For it is not said, that God appeared to him now, as he did iii. 5. and ix. 2, 3. In which latter Place it is said, God appeared to him *the second time*: Which is a Proof (as *Abarbinel* notes) that now God did not appear to him, but spake to him by a Prophet.

Ver. 12. *Concerning this house which thou art in building, if thou wilt walk in my statutes, and execute my judgments, and keep all my commandments, to walk in them: then will I perform my word with thee which I spake unto David thy father.]* 2 Sam. vii. 13. Here *Abarbinel* makes a Query, why this Prophecy is inserted in the Middle of the Work, which might seem to have been more proper in the Beginning, or after it was ended: But *Solomon* laying the Foundation, and raising the Building very firm and strong, which might last to many Generations, God would not have him presume upon its Duration, unless he and the People of *Israel* were obedient to him: And therefore told him, he had better not proceed, nor be at any further Charge, unless he intended to be a good Man, and observe all his Laws. And the Continuance of this House, and of God's Presence among them, depending on this, plainly signified, that let him build it ever so strong it should be demolished, if he proved disobedient.

Ver. 13. *And I will dwell among the children of Israel,]* As he had done in the Tabernacle, *Exod.* xxv. 8.

*And I will not forsake my people Israel.]* But protect them in the good Land he had given them.

Ver. 14. *So Solomon built the house, and finished it.]* God spake the foregoing Words, while he was building it, that he might desist, if he did not intend to be obedient to him. But

these Words import, that notwithstanding this Admonition, he went on, to build the House, as magnificent and durable as he intended; resolving to keep God's Commandments.

Ver. 15. *And he built the walls of the house within with boards of cedar,]* He wainscotted, as we now speak, the whole House with Cedar.

*Both the floor of the house, and the walls of the ceiling:]* Or, as we translate it in the Margin, from the Floor of the House, unto the Walls of the Ceiling. That is, from the Bottom to the Top.

*And he covered them in the inside with wood,]* The Word *them* is not in the *Hebrew*. Which if we retain, it relates to the Walls of the Ceiling: That is to the top of the House, which in the inside were covered with Wood, ver. 9.

*And covered the floor of the house with planks of fir.]* Or, with another sort of Cedar, which was a great deal firmer, and more lasting than Fir. See Chap. v. 8.

Ver. 16. *And he built twenty cubits on the side of the house,]* The House here meant, is the most holy Place: For he had spoken of the other part of the House, called the Sanctuary, in the foregoing Words.

*Both the floor, and the walls with boards of cedar:]* Or, as the foregoing Verse, from the Floor to the Walls of the Ceiling.

*He even built them for it within, even for the oracle, even for the most holy place.]* Here he explains what he meant by the House, in the Beginning of the Verse. And this was most properly the House of all the Parts of the Temple: because here the Divine Glory inhabited, and from hence God gave Answer, when he was consulted. It is called *Debir*: As the outward House is called *Hechal*.

Ver. 17. *And the house,]* That is, the holy Place, as the next Words explain it.

*That is, the temple before it,]* The part of the House, which was before the most holy Place. In the *Hebrew* the Words are *before my Face*: That is, before the Place where the Divine Glory appeared.

*Was forty cubits long.]* As long again as the most holy Place. See ver. 2. and 16.

Ver. 18. *And the cedar of the house within was carved with knops,]* Of an oblong Figure, like an Egg, as *Fosterus* thinks, comparing this Place with 2 Kings iv. Where there is the like Words, and there translated *Gourds*.

*And open flowers:]* Not Buds, but Flowers, spread and full blown.

*All was cedar, there was no stone seen.]* This relates, I suppose, to the Knops, and Flowers, which were all of Cedar: And so doth not contradict 2 Chron. iii. 5.

Ver. 19. *And the oracle he prepared in the house within, to set there the ark of the covenant of the LORD.]* In the innermost part of the House he fitted the most holy Place to receive the Ark of God. It seems to be called the innermost part, because it was furthest from the Entrance into the Building. The *Jewish* Doctors have a Conceit, that this signifies a Room which he made under Ground (under the Floor of the Oracle) where the Ark might be hid,



in case the House should be laid desolate. And he made this Cave in very deep and winding Burrows, putting a Stone upon the Mouth of it, upon which the Ark stood. Here *Josiah* they fancy hid the Ark, and the Pot of Manna, and the Rod of *Aaron*, and the holy Oil, where they were found after their Return from *Babylon*. For which Story there is no Foundation; and it contradicts what they all acknowledge, that there was no Ark in the second Temple. It is far more reasonable to think that by *Debir*, which we translate *Oracle*, is here meant the Partition which separated the holy Place from the most holy: Which *Solomon* is here said to have prepared or established, *in the midst of the House*, as the Words are in the *Hebrew*. This *Gousset* hath made probable: Though it appears from *ver. 23.* (where the Cherubims are said to be within the Oracle) that this Word signifies not only the Partition which made the Separation, but the Place it self, which was separated thereby from the Sanctuary, to be God's Dwelling-place.

Ver. 20. *And the oracle in the fore-part.]* That is, in the innermost Part before-mentioned: Which is also called the fore-part, because it was before him that entered into the House.

*Was twenty cubits in length, and twenty cubits in breadth, and twenty cubits in the height thereof:]* It was a perfect Square.

*And he overlaid it with pure gold,]* Not meerly gilt it, but covered it with Plates of Gold: For the Gold amounted to six hundred Talents, as *Ezra* saith, *2 Chron. iii. 8.*

*And so covered the altar]* Of Incense, which was before it in the holy Place.

*Which was of cedar.]* Or, *he covered the altar with cedar*, that the Gold might the better lie upon it.

Ver. 21. *So Solomon overlaid the house with pure gold:]* That is, the most holy Place (called the Oracle in the foregoing Verse) which he made as sumptuous as he could, for the Divine Residence.

*And he made a partition, by the chains of gold,]* The most holy Place was separated from the Sanctuary by a Partition: Before which there was a Vail also; which hung upon golden Chains. Thus this Passage is to be understood, for the Partition it self did not depend upon Chains.

*And he overlaid it with gold.]* That is, overlaid the Partition.

Ver. 22. *And the whole house he overlaid with gold,]* This is meant of the Sanctuary, which was overlaid with Gold, as well as the Oracle.

*Until he had finished all the house:]* Some think the very Chambers, which were without the House, were likewise made thus splendid. But I see no Ground to affirm it.

*Also the altar that was before the oracle he covered with gold.]* That is, the Altar of Incense; thence called the *Golden Altar*: which was in the upper End of the Sanctuary, near the Entrance in the Oracle. This he covered with Cedar, *ver. 20.* and now overlaid with Gold.

Ver. 23. *And within the oracle he made two cherubims of olive-tree, each ten cubits high.]* These were different from those made by *Moses*; which were of solid Gold: And arose out of each End of the Mercy-Seat; being of one

Piece with it, and looking one upon the other, *Exod. xxv. 18, 19.* But these were made of Olive-wood; or as it is in the *Hebrew*, of *Tree of Oil*. For many such sorts of Wood there were besides Olive; as Pine, Cedar, &c. And these two are plainly distinguished; Olive, and Oily-wood, in *Nehem. viii. 15.* Here it may be proper to note, that the Word *Debir* (which we constantly translate *Oracle*) comes from *Debar*, which signifies to *speak*; because God, who dwelt between the Cherubims, declared his Mind from hence, when he was consulted by the High-priest with *Urim* and *Thummim*: And it still retained this Name, though we never read of any Answer by *Urim* and *Thummim* while this Temple stood, because it had been the Place from whence God had been wont to speak to the High-priest. I have observed elsewhere, that there might be the Use of *Urim* and *Thummim* in this Temple, though it be not recorded: But it is highly probable, that upon their rejecting the Government of God, and turning the *Theocracy* into an Human Government by Kings, God ceased to direct and govern them by that Divine Oracle. During the Reign of *David* indeed, there is some Footsteps of it, their new Government by Kings (being not yet well established: So that we may think there was a Mixture of the *Theocracy* still with it, as may be gathered from *2 Sam. ii. 1. iii. 19, 23. xxi. 1.* But after that, there is not the least Glimpse of it; but they enquired of God by the Prophets, *1 Kings xxii. 3. 2 Kings iii. 11, 29. xxii. 14.* where the High-priest himself, being sent by King *Josiah* to enquire of God, went to *Huldah* the Prophetess. Which is a Demonstration, that the Answer by *Urim* and *Thummim* ceased, when God's Government was cast off by them: To which that Oracle properly appertained.

Ver. 24. *And five cubits was the one wing of the cherub and five cubits the other wing of the cherub: from the uttermost part of the one wing to the uttermost part of the other wing, was ten cubits.]* Whereas those of *Moses* were only so long as to cover the Mercy-Seat. Which was but two Cubits and a half in Length, *Exod. xxv. 17.*

Ver. 25. *And the other cherub was ten cubits: both the cherubims were of one measure, and one size.]* So that they filled the whole Breadth of the House; which was twenty Cubits.

Ver. 26. *The height of one cherub was ten cubits, and so was it of the other cherub.]* They stood upon their Feet, upon the Floor of the House (*2 Chron. iii. 13.*) each being ten Cubits high, as was said at the first, *ver. 23.* That is, half as high as the House.

Ver. 27. *And he set the cherubims within the inner house;]* With their Faces toward the Sanctuary: So that they looked upon him that entered into the Oracle.

*And they stretched forth the wings of the cherubims,]* Or rather (as in the Margin) *the cherubims stretched forth their wings.*

*So that the wings of the one touched the one wall, and the wings of the other touched the other wall:]* That is, the South and North Walls of the House. Whereas the Wings of those Cherubims that *Moses* made, stretched from East



East to West: For they looked one upon the other over the Mercy-Seat.

*And their wings touched one another in the midst of the house.]* Where they must needs meet, being five Cubits long on each side (*ver. 24.*) and the House twenty Cubits wide.

*Ver. 28. And he overlaid the cherubims with gold.]* So that there were four Cherubims in the most holy Place of Solomon's Temple. Two lesser made by *Moses* of massy Gold; and two larger made by *Solomon*, overlaid with Gold. Those made by *Moses* were part of the Mercy-Seat, and inseparable from it: These of *Solomon* seem to have spread their Wings over it, being added only for the greater Ornament and Glory of God's House. So *Abarbinel* observes, that *Solomon* did not make a new Ark, which was the only thing made by *Moses*, which *Solomon* did not imitate and make more glorious. But this he durst not presume to open, and to take out the Book of the Law, and put it into an Ark of his own making. It being unlawful for him to touch it, and therefore he let it remain, with its Cover, the Mercy-Seat, and the Cherubims belonging to it: And only placed these new Cherubims over it, as a Covering to it, for the greater Beauty of the House.

*Ver. 29. And he carved all the walls of the house round about with carved figures of cherubims, and palm-trees, and open flowers, within and without.]* Both in the most holy Place, and in the Sanctuary.

*Ver. 30. And the floor of the house he overlaid with gold, both within and without.]* This hath the same Meaning with the foregoing Words: That the Floor of the whole House, both inner and outward Part, was overlaid with Gold, which made it wonderfully splendid and magnificent.

*Ver. 31. And for the entrance of the oracle, he made doors of olive-tree:]* Or some Tree that was oily. See *Dr Lightfoot* of the Temple, p. 87.

*The lintel and side-posts were a fifth part of the wall.]* These Words are very obscure: For the Words of the wall are not in the Hebrew; but only a fifth. Which may be understood to signify, that they held the Proportion of a fifth part of the Doors. But there are those who think, the Meaning is, that this Gate was the fifth in Number belonging to the House. The first they make Account was that which let into the Court of the People: The second, into the Court of the Priests: The third was the Door of the Porch: The fourth, of the holy Place; and this fifth of the Oracle. And accordingly they interpret those Words, *ver. 33. the fourth.*

*Ver. 32. The two doors also were of olive-tree:]* Or, as it is in the Margin, *the leaves of the doors:* Explaining what sort of Doors they were, viz. Folding Doors, as it follows, *ver. 34.*

*And he carved upon them carvings of cherubims, and palm-trees, and open flowers, and overlaid them with gold, and spread gold upon the cherubims and palm-trees.]* The Meaning seems to be, that he laid Plates of Gold upon the Doors of the House; and gilt the Cherubims, Trees, and Flowers.

*Ver. 33. So also he made for the doors of the Temple,]* That is, of the holy Place.

*Posts of olive-tree, a fourth part of the wall,]* See *ver. 31.*

*Ver. 34. And the two doors were of fir-tree:]* Or, of a kind of Cedar; as was before observed.

*The two leaves of the one door were folding, and the two leaves of the other door were folding.]* Whereby they took up less room, when they were opened.

*Ver. 35. And he carved thereon cherubims, and palm-trees, and open flowers: and covered them with gold, fitted upon the carved work.]* This was said before, *ver. 32.* therefore repeated, I suppose, to signify that both Sides of the Doors were thus carved and covered with Gold. I have not meddled with the mystical Signification of any of these things: In which Mens Fancies differ very much: Though in one thing they all agree; that by the *Cherubims*, which were so plentiful in every part of the House, the Hosts of Angels are represented, there attending upon the Divine Majesty, as his Ministers to execute his Pleasure.

*Ver. 36. And he built the inner court]* Which was that wherein the Priests officiated.

*With three rows of hewed stone, and a row of cedar-beams.]* That the People who were in the outward Court might see what the Priests did: The Wall which separated the Priests from the Court of the People being but three Cubits high (as most understand these Words) for the Cedar was not laid upon the top of the Wall; but was the facing of it, within-side. The Priests likewise from hence might speak and deliver any Message from God to the People.

I conclude this Account of *Solomon's* Works with an Observation of *Abarbinel*: That this Divine Writer doth not mention several things belonging to the House of God, as the *Altar of Burnt-Offering*, the *Candlestick*, the *Table*, the *Laver* (though they were ten times as many as *Moses* made. See 2 *Chron. iii.*) because his Intention was only to explain the great things which he did, and such as wrought in Men Admiration: Not things in which there was no Majesty, nor any great Cost bestowed upon them. Therefore he takes notice of the great and precious Stones (that is, Stones of great Price) wherewith he laid the Foundation of the House (*ver. 17.*) and the rest of the things mentioned in this Chapter; which were very chargeable, and which shewed the Greatness of his Mind, his Wisdom, Prophecy (as his Words are) and Riches: But other things, as the Court of the Temple, &c. he passes over compendiously. But this Observation is not altogether true; for though this Divine Writer does not take notice of every thing made by *Solomon*, in this Chapter; yet in the next, I think, he omits nothing, save only the *Brazen Altar of Burnt-offering*, which is not mentioned in this Book among *Solomon's* Works; but taken particular notice of in 2 *Chron. iv. 1.* where its large Dimensions are described. All other things, as the *Lavers*, the *Candlestick*, the *Table*, &c. are here mentioned in the following Chapter.

*Ver. 37. In the fourth year was the foundation of the house laid, in the month Zif.]* He repeats this



this (which was said *ver. 1.*) to subjoin in the next Words, how long the House was in building.

*Ver. 38. And in the eleventh year, in the month Bul (which is the eighth month)]* As Zif was the second.

*Was the house finished throughout all the parts thereof, and according to all the fashion of it:]* Every thing was compleatly finished, according to his Design; without any need of Addition or Alteration.

*So was he seven years in building it.]* And an half: But the lesser Number is omitted, as is usual in these Books, and in other Authors: Particularly half a Year is omitted in the Reign of *David*, who is only said to have reigned forty Years. See the second Chapter of this Book, *ver. 11.* And considering the Curiosity of the Work, and the Scarcity of Men of Skill, it is no Wonder that it was so long before it was perfected: But rather the Alacrity and Diligence of *Solomon* (as *Abarbinel* notes) is to be admired; who finished this Work with all the Speed he could make; when he was almost as many more Years in building his own House, which was not so costly and sumptuous. An Account of which is given us, in the Beginning of the next Chapter: Where the Author tells us he built two Houses, and sets down the Dimensions of one of them.

## C H A P. VII.

*Verse 1. BUT Solomon was building his own house thirteen years, and he finished all his house.]* He did not begin to build his own House 'till he had finished the House of God; that nothing might hinder that holy Work. This appears from *ix. 10.* where we read he was twenty Years in building both.

*Ver. 2. And he built also the house of the forest of Lebanon;]* The fore-named House was in *Jerusalem*: Near to which he built another, in a cool, shady Mountain; which made it resemble Mount *Lebanon*. And here he dwelt in Summer, as in the other in Winter. But it is not likely it was in Mount *Lebanon*; for that was in the very Extremity of his Kingdom; where he would not have set his Throne (as he seems to have done in this House, *ver. 7.*) for that was too far distant from the usual Place of his Residence. And for the same Reason he would not have there placed the golden Shields that he made; as we find he did, *x. 17.* It was therefore near to *Jerusalem* (appears from *xiv. 25, 26.*) and called by the Name of the *Forest of Lebanon*: Just as many pleasant and delightful Places in that Country were called *Carmel*. Because it was in a lofty Place like *Lebanon*; and the Trees which grew there made it very shady and cool.

*The length thereof was an hundred cubits,]* Which was not longer than the House of God, if we take in all the Courts belonging to it.

*And the height thereof thirty cubits,]* The Height of the first Story was so many Cubits: Upon which, in all likelihood, there was another of the like Height.

*Upon four rows of cedar pillars,]* Which sup-

ported the Building; and made four Walks under it.

*With cedar-beams upon the pillars.]* Upon which was laid the Floor of the next Story.

*Ver. 3. And it was covered with cedar above, upon the beams that lay on forty-five pillars, fifteen in a row.]* So there were but three Rows of Pillars in the second Story, which were sufficient for the Support of the Roof. And we may guess from hence that there were three-score Pillars below.

*Ver. 4. And there were windows in three rows, and light was against light.]* Directly opposite one against the other: Which we call thorough Lights.

*In three ranks.].* Or, on three Sides of the House, the South, the North, and the East; that it might have the freer Air. On the West Side was the Porch, and so no Windows were there. Others interpret it, the Windows were exactly one under another in three Rows.

*Ver. 5. And all the doors and posts were square, with the windows:]* The Figures of the Doors and of the Windows were one and the same, viz. square.

*And light was against light in three ranks.]* This is meant of the smaller Windows, that were over the Doors: Which it is likely were also square.

*Ver. 6. And he made a porch of pillars; the length thereof was fifty cubits, and the breadth thereof thirty cubits:]* This was for his Guard, and for People to walk in who came about Business, (as well as for State and Ornament) and therefore was covered to keep them dry in rainy Weather.

*And the porch was before them:]* That is, before the Pillars of the great House, before spoken of.

*And the other pillars, and the thick beams were before them.]* That is, they were directly opposite one to the other. Or, if we follow the Marginal Translation (according to them) the Sense is, that it had its Pillars and Beams just like the great House: And, it is likely, Rooms built upon those Beams for his Servants.

*Ver. 7. Then he made a porch for the throne where he might judge, even the porch of judgment:]* So it was called, because here he sat to hear and determine the Causes that People brought before him. With whom he would not have his House cumbered; but made this Porch without the House, where he dispatched such Business.

*And it was covered with cedar from one side to the other.]* In the Hebrew, *from floor to floor*: That is, from the Ground to the Roof of the Porch.

*Ver. 8. And his house where he dwelt, had another court within the porch, which was of the like work.]* There was a Court between the Porch and the House, which may be called the inner Court: And then another beyond the Porch, which may be called the outward. So that it stood between two Courts, which were both alike.

*Solomon also built an house for Pharaoh's daughter]* Near, I suppose, to his own House; she being a Person of the highest Quality, and his first Wife.

*Which*



(Which he had taken to wife)] See iii. 1.

*Like unto this porch.*] Not for Figure, or Bigness; but for the Materials of which it was built.

Ver. 9. *All these were of costly stones, according to the measure of hewen stones, sawed with saws, within and without,*] All the formentioned Buildings were polished on both Sides: So that they appeared both within and without; that is, both on the Inside which was toward the Palace of Solomon, and on the Outside which was toward the great Court.

*Even from the foundation unto the coping,*] From the Bottom of the Building to the Top of it.

*And so on the outside toward the great court.*] Not only on the Front of the House, but on the Back-side of it, toward the great Court.

Ver. 10. *And the foundation was of costly stones, even great stones; of ten cubits, and stones of eight cubits.*] By costly Stones (mentioned here and in the foregoing and following Verses) are not to be understood precious Stones; but Stones that being bigger and firmer, and better polished than others, were of greater Price: As Bochartus explains it, both here and v. 17.

Ver. 11. *And above were costly stones (after the measure of hewen stones) and cedars.*] The Roof was finished after the same Manner; with Stones, and Cedar Beams.

Ver. 12. *And the great court round about*] Viz. of Solomon's Palace.

*Was with three Rows of hewen stone, and a row of cedar beams,*] Just like the inner Court of the House of the LORD, vi. 36. and so the following Words are to be understood.

*Both for the inner court of the house of the LORD,*] Or rather, as for the inner Court of the LORD's House: For so the Particle *Vau* sometimes signifies.

*And for the porch of the house.*] Of Solomon's own House.

Ver. 13. *And king Solomon sent and set Hiram out of Tyre.*] For though he was an *Israhelite* by Birth, yet he dwelt at Tyre: And it is likely had the Privileges of that City, and so was one of King Hiram's Subjects. And therefore in 2 Chron. ii. 13. that King saith he sent him to Solomon: That is, granted his Request, that this Man might come and serve him. And accordingly Solomon sent for him and fetcht him to Jerusalem.

Ver. 14. *He was a widow's son of the tribe of Naphtali,*] She her self was of the Tribe of Dan, 2 Chron. ii. 14. but her first Husband was of the Tribe of Naphtali: by whom she had this Son.

*And his father was a man of Tyre,*] When she was a Widow she married a Man of Tyre: Who is called Hiram's Father, because he bred him up, and was the Husband of his Mother.

*A worker of brasse:*] And in Stone, and Purple, and a great many other Things, as we read in the Place abovementioned. But Brasse is only mentioned here; because he is going to speak only of such Works.

*And he was filled with wisdom and understanding, and cunning to work all work in brasse;*] He had an excellent Genius to this Work; and besides the Instructions of his Father, it is not improbable that God endued him with great Skill in

contriving, and also working all manner of Work of this Sort.

*And he came to king Solomon, and wrought all his work.*] He presently found him to be an excellent Artift; and so employed him in all his Business.

Ver. 15. *And he cast two pillars of brasse of eighteen cubits high a-piece:*] In 2 Chron. ii. 15. it is said he made two Pillars of thirty-five Cubits high: Which doth not contradict these Words, it being evident that there he speaks of both the Pillars (as Abarbinel observes) which were thirty-five Cubits. But here he speaks of them single, which were each but eighteen Cubits. Both of them indeed made thirty-six Cubits; but one Cubit must be allowed for the Basis of each, which is not considered in the Book of Chronicles. This seems a better Solution of this small Difficulty than that of L'Empereur in his Preface to *Codex Middoth*, where he saith, one of these Writers speaks of the common Cubit, and the other of the sacred, which was double to the common. Each Pillar therefore he thinks was eighteen sacred Cubits, but thirty-five common; to which one common Cubit must be added for the Basis: But this Distinction of common and sacred Cubits is not allowed by every body.

*And a line of twelve cubits did compass either of them about.*] So they were four Cubits in Thickness. See Dr Lightfoot of the Temple, p. 61, 62, 63. And L'Empereur's Preface to *Benjamin Tudelensis*. Eupolemus a Heathen Writer takes Notice of these Pillars, and says they were as high as the Temple. Eusebius, Lib. 9. *Præpar. Evang.* Cap. 34.

Ver. 16. *And he made two chapiters of molten brasse, to set upon the top of the pillars: the height of the one chapter was five cubits, and the height of the other was five cubits:*] This Account of them Ezra also gives, 2 Chron. iii. 15. Yet in 2 Kings xxv. 17. they are said to be but three Cubits. But it is to be observed that it immediately follows in that Place, there was a wreathen work, and pomegranates upon the chapiters: Which in all made five Cubits; and are all here comprehended in the Word *chapter*.

Ver. 17. *And nets of chequer-work, and wreaths of chain-work, for the chapiters which were upon the top of the pillars;*] This curious Work encompassed the Chapter, and contained, as it were, the Pomegranates afterwards mentioned; which might be seen through these Nets.

*Seven for the one chapter, and seven for the other chapter.*] Some think that each Chapter was adorned with Leaves, and Flowers, and Fruit, in four Orders; which were bound about with three Chains. But it is very hard to explain this Work, which is so very briefly described. See Dr Lightfoot in the forenamed Place.

Ver. 18. *And he made the pillars,*] That is, he finished them in this Manner. See the same Author, p. 63.

*And two rows round about upon the one net-work, to cover the chapiters that were upon the top, with pomegranates: and so did he for the other chapter.*] There were two Rows of Pomegranates; which took up one of the five Cubits, whereof the Chapter consisted.

Ver. 19.



Ver. 19. *And the chapiters that were upon the top of the pillars, were of lily-work*] In Imitation of Lilies.

*In the porch,*] Such as were in the Porch of the Temple.

*Four Cubits.*] The other four Cubits were of this Lily-work, except the Middle.

Ver. 20. *And the chapiters upon the two pillars had pomegranates also above, over against the belly which was by the net-work :*] This is very obscure, because shortly delivered. But the Meaning seems to be, that the Lily-work being above and below, at the Top and the Bottom of the Chapiters, the middle Cubit (called the Belly) was all covered with Pomegranates.

*And the pomegranates were two hundred, round about upon the other chapter.*] In the Book of *Jeremiah* lii. 23. it is said that there were ninety-six on a Side ; but all of them, upon the Net-work, were an hundred in all : Which *Abarbinel* thus explains. The Pomegranates on the Net-work were towards the four Quarters of the World, being twenty-four towards each Quarter ; which in all made ninety-six. And in each Angle, there being one great Pomegranate, they made up the Number an hundred.

Ver. 21. *And he set up the pillars in the porch of the temple : and he set up the right pillar, and called the name of it Jachin, and he set up the left pillar, and called the name thereof Boaz.*] It is generally thought that these Pillars were made and erected only for Ornament ; because they supported no Building, But *Abarbinel's* Conjecture is not improbable, that *Solomon* had respect to the Pillar of the Cloud, and the Pillar of Fire that went before them and conducted them in the Wilderness, and was the token of the Divine Providence over them. These he set at the Porch or Entrance of the Temple (*Jachin* representing the Pillar of the Cloud, and *Boaz* the Pillar of Fire) praying and hoping that the Divine Light, and the Cloud of his Glory would vouchsafe to enter in there ; and by them God and his Providence would dwell among them in this House.

Ver. 22. *And upon the top of the pillars was lily-work :*] This seems to have been said before, ver. 19. but the next Words, *So was the work of pillars finished*, shew that this was a new Addition, to crown all, after the Pillars were erected ; as *Abarbinel* observes.

Ver. 23. *And he made a molten sea,*] The *Hebrews* call any great Collection of Waters by the Name of a Sea. So the Lake of *Genesaret*, and others, are called in the Gospel : And here it signifies a great Vessel, containing Abundance of Water. Which served for the washing of the Sacrifices, and of the Priests and Levites ; who washed their Hands and their Feet ; not in it, but with Water drawn out of it by Pipes or Conduits.

*Ten cubits from the one brim to the other : and it was round about,*] Of a circular Figure.

*And its height was five cubits :*] Beside the Height of the Oxen whereon it stood.

*And a line of thirty cubits did compass it about.*] For the Diameter being ten Cubits, this must be the Compass of it. This Sea was filled with Water by the *Gibeonites* ; who were afterward called *Nethinims*.

Ver. 24. *And under the brim round about there were knops compassing it,*] They were in the Shape of an Egg ; on the Top of every one of which was an Ox Head ; from whose Mouth Water gushed out : So *Abarbinel* gathers from 2 *Chron.* ii. 3. where they are called Oxen, from the Figure of their Head.

*Ten in a cubit, compassing the sea round about :*] So there were three hundred of these Knops in all ; the Sea being thirty Cubits round.

*The knops were cast in two rows, when it was cast.*] They were not carved afterward, but cast at first when the Sea was molten. And there being two Rows of them, *Abarbinel* thence concludes there were six Hundred in all, one under another. From whence Water might flow out of the Sea, to wash a great Number at a Time.

Ver. 25. *And it stood upon twelve oxen,*] Oxen were used not only for drawing the Plough, but for carrying Burdens upon their Backs ; as they are still employed among the *Indians*. Whence *Solomon* placed the Figure of these Creatures under his molten Sea, as the Supporters of it. There was so little Danger of their being worshipped, that the Meanness of the Use to which they served, had made some believe that *Solomon* made them in Contempt of the golden Calf, which the *Israelites* worshipped in the Wilderness ; and placed them under the Sea, that the People might see there was nothing worthy of Adoration in these Figures. *Josephus* indeed thinks *Solomon* offended in making these Images : But this is confuted by the Glory of the LORD filling the Temple after it was finished. Which shewed that he approved of all this Work ; which it is likely was done by his Instruction : But some great Men think *Josephus* is in the right.

*Three looking toward the north, and three looking toward the west, and three looking toward the south, and three looking toward the east :*] This seems to import that this Sea was square (the Oxen looking towards the four Quarters of the World) whereas it is said before, ver. 25. that it was round all about. And so it was (as the *Jewish* Interpreters, particularly *Abarbinel* and *Rabbag*, expound this) in the Brim of it, it was perfectly round, and so it continued in the two upper Cubits : But below the Brim (in the three lower Cubits) it was square. And, as *Kimchi* thinks, in the two upper Cubits there were no Knops ; but in the three lower, just above the Oxen that supported the Sea.

*And the sea was set above upon them, and all their hinder parts were inward.*] Under the Sea, that they might not be seen.

Ver. 26. *And it was an hand breadth thick, and the brim thereof was wrought like the brim of a cup, with flowers of lilies :*] In the Shape of Lilies : That is, not plain and straight, but bending downwards, after the Manner of those Flowers. See Dr *Lightfoot* of the Temple, p. 230, &c.

*It contained two thousand baths.*] A Bath being of the same Bigness with an *Ephab* (*Ezek.* xlv. 11.) is thought to contain eight Gallons : So that this Sea contained five hundred Barrels ; that is, it had thus much Water constantly in it. But if it had been filled up to the

Brim,



Brim, it would have held three thousand Baths, as we read 2 Chron. iv. 5. which Quantity they were not wont to put into it, lest with the Wind it should run over. Or, as the most learned of the Jews reconcile these two Places, these Words in the Book of the Kings are to be understood of moist Things; but those in the Chronicles of dry; which being heaped up, it would contain a third Part more than of Things liquid. With which some compare those Words of our Saviour, Luke vi. 38. *Good measure heaped up, shaken together, and running over.*

Ver. 27. *And he made ten bases of brass;*] Tables or Stands upon which the Lavers (mentioned below, ver. 38.) were to rest. See Dr Lightfoot of the Temple, p. 228, &c.

*Four cubits was the length of one base, and four cubits the breadth, and three cubits the height thereof.*] They were made so broad that the Lavers might stand more firmly, being each four Cubits; but not so high, that the Priests might more easily reach to wash the Sacrifices in them, 2 Chron. iv. 6.

Ver. 28. *And the work of the bases was in this manner: They had borders,*] To keep up the Lavers from falling.

Ver. 29. *And the borders were between the ledges:*] It is not easy to apprehend what he means by Ledges; because, as P. Martyr observes, we have no such Work in these Days.

*And on the borders that were between the ledges were lions, and oxen, and cherubims:*] Oxen are called Cherubims in Ezek. x. 14. Therefore the Meaning here is, that besides Lions and Oxen, there were other Cherubims (the Figures of Eagles perhaps) which adorned these Borders.

*And upon the ledges there was a base above:*] This is so darkly expressed, that I do not apprehend the Meaning; unless it be this, that the upper Ledge was over the Heads of these Animals; and the under Ledge was that upon which their Feet rested, as the next Words signify.

*And beneath the lions and oxen were certain additions of thin work.*] Under these Figures there was some other Work added (which was not cast together with them) and drawn very thin.

Ver. 30. *And every base had four brazen wheels,*] They run upon Wheels like a Coach, or Chariot; so might easily be removed from Place to place, as the Convenience of the Priests required.

*And plates of brass:*] Between the Wheels and the Bases. See Dr Lightfoot in the same Book, p. 226.

*And the four corners thereof*] For they were square, ver. 27.

*Had under-setters:*] In the Hebrew, *Shoulders*. Which were fitly so called, because as Burdens are born upon Mens Shoulders, so were the Lavers upon these; which supported them, when set upon the Bases, and kept them from falling when they run upon the Wheels.

*Under the lavers were under-setters molten, at the side of every addition.*] These were molten with the Bases, when they were cast.

Ver. 31. *And the mouth of it,*] The Bases seem to have been hollow at the Top; that the Feet of the Lavers might enter in, and be fastned there: And this he calls the *Mouth* of it.

V O L. II.

*Within the chapter and above*] Nothing of a Chapter is mentioned 'till now: Therefore it is hard to know what is meant by it. Many take it for a smaller Basis, rising out of the greater; in which was the Mouth, or hollow Place before spoken of.

*Was a cubit:*] In Height. See ver. 35. where it is said, *on the top of the base was a round compass half a cubit high.*] Which seems to be meant of this Chapter, which rose but Half a Cubit above the Base, the other Half being below it.

*But the mouth thereof was round after the work of the base, a cubit and an half:*] This was the Wideness of it.

*And also upon the mouth of it were gravings with their borders, four-square, not round.*] Through this hollow Place, called the Mouth, was round within; yet on the Outside it was square, and had Borders which were engraved.

Ver. 32. *And under the borders were four wheels: and the axle-trees of the wheels were joined to the base, and the height of a wheel was a cubit and half a cubit.*] So that the Bottom of the Base was not far from the Ground.

Ver. 33. *And the work of the wheels was like the work of a chariot wheel:*] Only the hinder Wheels and the fore Wheels were all of a Height.

*Their axle-trees, and their naves, and their felles, and their spokes were all molten.*] Cast together with the Wheels.

Ver. 34. *And there were four under-setters to the four corners of one base: and the under-setters were of the very base it self.*] He mentioned the Under-setters before, ver. 30. Now he relates the Number of them; and that they were of the same piece with the Base itself; being cast together with it, and not made afterwards.

Ver. 35. *And on the top of the base, there was a round compass of half a cubit high:*] See ver. 31.

*And on the top of the base, the ledges thereof, and the borders thereof were the same.*] Cast all together at the same Time.

Ver. 36. *For on the plates of the ledges thereof, and on the borders thereof, he graved cherubims, lions, and palm-trees, according to the proportion of every one, and additions round about.*] In the Hebrew, according to the nakedness of every one: Which seems to signify that these Figures were as big as the void Space, in the Plates would admit.

Ver. 37. *After this manner he made the ten bases: all of them had one casting, one measure, and one side.*] They were cast in the same Mold; and all of the same Bigness and Shape.

Ver. 37. *Then made he ten lavers of brass:*] Which were to stand upon the Bases fore-mentioned.

*One laver contained forty baths:*] See ver. 26. From whence it will appear that each of these Lavers contained ten Barrels of Water.

*And every laver was four cubits:*] Some think that they were of this Height. But these Words rather relate to the Diameter of them, which was four Cubits: And then their Compass was twelve Cubits.

*Upon every one of the ten bases one laver.*] The Bases being exactly fitted to receive them: For they were each four Cubits in Length and Breadth, ver. 27.

E c c

Ver. 39.



Ver. 39. *And he put five on the right side]* That is, on the South-side, see vi. 8.

*Of the house,]* That is, of the Court where the Priests ministred.

*And five on the left side of the house :]* That is, on the North-side of that Court.

*And he set the sea on the right side of the house east-ward, over-against the south.]* That is, in the South-east : So that as soon as the Priests entred (which they did at the East Gate) they might have Water to wash their Hands and their Feet.

Ver. 40. *And Hiram made the lavers, and the shovels, and the basons : so Hiram made an end of all the work that he made king Solomon for the house of the LORD.]* These seem to have been the last Things that he made : And so he finished all the Work, which he recapitulates, with the Addition of some others not mentioned before. *Shovels*, for Instance, or *Beesoms* wherewith they cleansed the Alter from the Ashes, that they might not hinder the Fire from burning : And *Basons*, wherein the Priests received the Blood of the Sacrifices that were offered.

Ver. 41. *The two pillars, and two bowls of the chapiters that were on the top of the two pillars : and the two net-works, to cover the bowls of the chapiters that were on the top of the pillars :*

Ver. 42. *And four hundred pomegranates for the two net-works, even two rows of pomegranates for one net-work, to cover the two bowls of the chapiters that were upon the pillars :]* Being to sum up all the Works he had finished, he now adds the Number of Pomegranates that were upon the Pillars : Which had not been mentioned before.

Ver. 43. *And ten bases, and ten lavers upon the bases :*

Ver. 44. *And one sea, and twelve oxen under the sea :*

Ver. 45. *And the pots,]* Pots or Cauldrons were those Vessels, wherein they boiled those Sacrifices which were divided between the Priest and the People that offered them. That is, *Peace-offerings*, that they might eat them before the LORD, and feast with him upon his own meat.

*Shovels and basons :]* They are mentioned before, but here I suppose have a different Signification (though in the *Hebrew* the Words are the same) from what they had in ver. 40. <sup>2</sup> And the first Word signifies *Flesh-hooks*, wherewith they took the Meat out of the Pots : And the second the *Platters* or *Dishes* into which it was put, to be set before them.

*And all these vessels which Hiram made to king Solomon for the house of the LORD, were of bright brass.]* Or polished Brass : Or, the purest and finest that could be got. The *Syriack* and *Arabick* Translators render it, *Corinthian Brass*. But it is not credible, that it was known in the Days of Solomon.

Ver 46. *In the plain of Jordan did the king cast them in the clay-ground, between Succoth and Zarthan.]* In the *Hebrew* the Words for *clay-ground* are, *in the Thickness of the Ground*. That is, the Earth was stiff, and glutinous, and upon that Account more fit to make Molds of all Kinds. And in a plain Country, such Molds were more easily fixed than on the Sides of Hills, or steep Places.

Ver. 47. *And Solomon left all the vessels unweighed, because they were exceeding many : neither was the weight of the brass found out.]* In the *Hebrew*, it was not searched, or enquired into ; because it would have been very troublesome to take an exact Account of it.

Ver. 48. *And Solomon made all the vessels that pertained unto the house of the LORD :]* He made them all new, except the Ark, the Mercy-Seat, and the Cherubims annexed to it.

*The altar of gold,]* That is, the Altar of Incense, which stood in the Holy Place before the Oracle.

*And the table of gold, whereon the shew-bread was,]* That is, all the Table-work : There being no less than ten, 2 *Chron.* iv. 7, 8 Upon one of which, in all Probability, which was more noble than the rest, the Shew-bread was placed. Unless we suppose the Table which *Moses* made was preserved for that Use ; and *Solomon* added the rest for the greater Ornament of the Place. And (as *Josephus* writes) the Gold and Silver Basons were set upon them ; together with a vast Number of Phials.

Ver. 49. *And the candlesticks of pure gold, five on the right side, and five on the left, before the oracle,]* He made ten Candlesticks instead of one which was in the Tabernacle of *Moses* : Because the Place was more capacious ; and the Vessels were not to be removed from Place to Place as they were before : And therefore there might well be more of them.

*The flowers,]* Which were wrought upon the Candlesticks.

*The lamps, and the tongs of gold,]* Wherewith to take Coals from the Altar of Burnt-offering.

Ver. 50. *And the bowls, and the snuffers and the basons, and the spoons, and the censers of pure gold ;]* The Use of these is visible. The first being to keep Oil for the Lamps ; the next to trim them : The *Basons* (which were an hundred, as we learn from the Book of *Chronicles*) were to receive the Water of Sprinkling, and the Blood of the Sacrifices which was sometimes brought into the most Holy Place. The *Spoons* served to take up the Oil. The *Censers* were for offering Incense ; though some translate this Word, *Dish-pans*, wherein the Incense was kept. There were other Censers of Silver, which received the Coals from the Altar upon all Days, but the Tenth of *Tisri* (which was the great Day of Expiation) when the Golden Censer received them, and by it the most Holy Place was incensed. On other Days it was not employed, but at the Altar of Incense ; where the Coals were poured out of the Silver Censer (which received them from the Altar of Burnt-offerings) into the Golden, to burn the Incense : As the *Talmudists* say, both in *Codex Joma* and *Tamid*. Where they also say that the foregoing Word *Capoth*, which we translate *Spoons*, signifies a Vessel which contained the Incense that was to be offered upon the Coals in the Golden Censer. See *Braunius* in his *Selecta Sacra*, Lib. 2. Cap. 5. where he hath learnedly explained both these Words *Capth* and *Machtah*, which we translate *Spoons* and *Censers* ; where he hath demonstrated, the latter signifies the Instrument that received the Coals from



from the Altar of Burnt-Offering, and the former, that which had the Incense in it, to be poured upon them.

*And the hinges of gold, both for the doors of the inner house, the most holy place, and for the house, to wit, of the temple.]* This shews the vast Riches of Solomon, and his great Piety: Which made him spare no Cost to beautify the House of God, and the meanest thing belonging to it. Whereby the People, who were much taken with outward Splendor, were preserved from Idolatry: For they could go no where and see a Place comparable to this of Solomon; there being then nothing in the whole World like to it for Riches and Glory.

Ver. 51. *So was ended all the work that king Solomon made for the house of the LORD: and Solomon brought in the things which David his father had dedicated; even the silver, and the gold, and the vessels did he put among the treasures of the house of the LORD.]* I observed upon vi. 1. that *Abarbinel* thinks he would use none of the things that were dedicated by his Father; but do all at his own Cost and Charges. Yet others think these Words mean no more, but that all the remaining Silver and Gold, which David left, and was not spent in this Work, Solomon would not employ to his own Uses; but religiously preserved in the Treasury of the Temple. Where the Altar of Burnt-offering, which Moses made, and some other things, which are now of no Use (far better and larger being made) were also laid up; as the Tabernacle it self was. For the Temple being built, there was no further Occasion for the Tabernacle; and yet it was fit to preserve it, as a Place that had been Holy to the LORD.

## C H A P. VIII.

Verse 1. **A**ND Solomon assembled the elders of Israel,] That is, the Judges in their several Cities.

*And all the heads of the tribes,]* Every Tribe had one or more principal Ruler in it.

*And the chief of the fathers of the children of Israel,]* The principal Persons of every Family in those Tribes.

*Unto king Solomon, in Jerusalem,]* Where the House of the LORD was now fixed.

*That they might bring up the ark of the covenant of the LORD, out of the city of David, which is Zion.]* For thither David had brought it from the House of Obed-Edom, and made a Tabernacle for it (2 Sam. vi. 12, 17.) until a fixed House should be prepared for it: Which was now built upon a neighbouring Mountain.

Ver. 2. *And all the men of Israel]* All the fore-named Persons, with their Attendants: Which no doubt were numerous.

*Assembled themselves unto king Solomon, at the feast in the month Ethanim, which is the seventh month.]* Here the Targum thus paraphrases, *in the Month which anciently was called the first Month, but now is the seventh:* And called *Ethanim*, because more sacred Solemnities (which were the Support and Strength of their Religion and Government) were appointed in this Month than in any other. And among the rest

the Feast of Tabernacles; which is here meant, as *Kimchi* and *Abarbinel* and others think. And upon the Occasion of this Assembly the *Jews* observe in *Seder Olam Rabba*, Cap. 15. that *the Schekinah doth not dwell, but in the Congregation.*

Ver. 3. *And all the elders of Israel came,]* All the fore-mentioned great Persons were called *Elders*, and are here comprehended under that Name.

*And the priests took up the ark.]* The Ark had been carried by the Priests three Times before this: When they went over *Jordan*; when they incompassed the Walls of *Jericho*; and when David sent it back, when he fled from *Absalom*, 2 Sam. xv. 29, 30. It was the Office of the Levites to carry the Ark upon their Shoulders, except upon special Occasions: And now they could not, because it was not lawful for them to enter into the Holy Place, into which it was to be carried, and then into the most Holy. It is said indeed, 2 Chron. v. 4. that *the Levites took it up:* But the Meaning is, that they took it up and carried it to the Temple, and then the Priests took it up (ver. 6.) and carried it into the Holy Place.

Ver. 4. *And they brought up the ark of the LORD, and the tabernacle of the congregation,]* Together with the Ark, they brought up the Tabernacle. But the Question is what Tabernacle, whether that made by Moses which was in *Gibeon*, 2 Chron. i. 3. or that made by David which was at *Jerusalem*, 2 Sam. vi. 17. I think the latter is never called *the Tabernacle of the Congregation*, as the former frequently is. But it may be probably thought that both of them were now carried into the Temple, and laid up there; to avoid all Danger of Superstition and Idolatry: And that no Worship might be performed any where, but only at this House of God, which he now dedicated to him.

*And all the holy vessels that were in the tabernacle.]* Viz. the Altar of Incense, and the Table, and the Candlestick, and every thing belonging to them: Which remained in the Tabernacle, when the Ark was removed from it.

*These did the priests and the levites bring up.]* The Priests brought up the Ark; and the Levites carried the Tabernacle, and the Vessels of the Sanctuary.

Ver. 5. *And king Solomon, and all the congregation of Israel that were assembled unto him, were with him before the ark,]* When it was brought into the House of God, and settled there; for it is not likely such a Multitude of Sacrifices as follow, could be offered in the way from Mount *Sion* to the Temple, as some were when David brought it from the House of Obed-Edom to *Jerusalem*, 2 Sam. vi. 13.

*And sacrificed sheep, and oxen, that could not be numbred for multitude,]* That is, a vast Number; which might have been told, but not easily; as was said before of the Weight of the Brass employed about the vessels of the House of God, vii. 47. See there. Here is no mention of Solomon's dancing before the Ark as David did; for all Holy Men were not alike moved by God; their Tempers and Conditions being very different. Solomon was now in a



a State of great Tranquillity, and constant Pleasure: But *David* had been disturbed by the Stroke upon *Uzzah*, a little before his great Transport of Joy, at the safe Conduct of the Ark to *Jerusalem*.

Ver. 6. *And the priests brought in the ark of the covenant of the LORD unto his place, in the oracle of the house, to the most holy place,] Before the Glory of the LORD filled the House, the Priests were permitted to enter into the Oracle: But afterwards none but the High-Priest might approach so near unto the Divine Presence, which dwelt there: And he but once a Year.*

*Even under the wings of the cherubims.] Which Solomon had made. For the Cherubims made by Moses were fixed to the Mercy-Seat, and inseparable from it: And stood together with the Ark under these Cherubims.*

Ver. 7. *For the cherubims spread forth their two wings over the place of the ark, and the cherubims covered the ark, and the staves thereof.] For they were very large, stretching forth their Wings from one side of the House unto the other, vi. 22, 24, &c.*

Ver. 8. *And they drew out the staves, that the end of the staves were seen out in the holy place before the oracle,] By the Holy Place is here meant the most Holy, where the Ark was under the Cherubims: Which covered both the Ark and the Staves. But the Staves were so drawn out that the Ends of them might be seen: Whereby the High-priest was directed in the Way he should go just before the Mercy-Seat on the Day of Expiation; when he went between these two Staves to sprinkle the Blood before God. See 2 Chron. v. 9. and Buxtorf in his *Arca Fœderis*, where he explains both this and the next Verse, and gives a large Account of drawing out the Staves, p. 96, 97.*

*And they were not seen without:] In the Sanctuary.*

*And there they are unto this day.] And in this Posture.*

Ver. 9. *There was nothing in the ark save the two tables of Stone, which Moses put there at Horeb, when the LORD made a covenant with the children of Israel, when they came out of the land of Egypt.] The very same Words, in a manner, are repeated, 2 Chron. v. 10. But it is commonly observed that both these Places seem to contradict the Apostle's Words, Heb. ix. 4. For it is said here in these Books, that nothing was in the Ark save only the two Tables of Stone: But that there, the Pot of Manna and Aaron's Rod was also in the Ark. For so they generally interpret those Words ἐν ᾗ in which, i. e. in the Ark σάρον ἡ χρυσή, the Golden Pot containing the Manna, &c. Many learned Men have endeavoured to reconcile these Places several Ways, which *Andreas Sennertus* hath collected in a Treatise on purpose about it. Which might have been spared by this easy Observation, that the Preposition ἐν doth not always signify in, but by: And so the Place in the Hebrews is to be rendred, not in which, but by which. *Bochartus* hath given a great many Instances of such Use of the Particle *Beth* in the Old Testament, *Hierozyicon. P. 2. Lib. 2. Cap. 50.* And indeed it is never said there that the*

Pot of Manna was laid up in the Ark, but before the LORD and before the Testimony, *Exod. xvi. 33, 34.* and the same is said of Aaron's Rod, *Numb. xvii. 4.* Which signifies no more than putting them by the Ark. See *Huetius Demonstr. Evang. p. 322.*

Ver. 10. *And it came to pass, when the priests were come out of the holy place,] That is, the Oracle, where they had set down the Ark.*

*That the cloud filled the house of the LORD.] In this Cloud was the Glory of the LORD (ver. 11.) which now filled the Temple, as it had anciently done the Tabernacle, when it was first erected, Exod. xl. 34. Only there the Cloud covered the Tabernacle without, and the Glory of the LORD shined within: But here the House it self was filled with the Cloud, out of which the Glory of the LORD broke; and after it had filled the whole House, settled in the most Holy Place.*

Ver. 11. *So the priests could not stand to minister, because of the cloud: for the glory of the LORD hath filled the house of the LORD.] By this it appears that the Cloud filled the Sanctuary, as well as the most Holy Place: For in the Sanctuary the Priests ministered at the Altar of Incense. And it appears also by the next Verse, that, at the first, nothing but a dark Cloud filled the House, which was very astonishing: But afterwards the Glory of the LORD (as I said) broke out, which was more amazing. Insomuch that Moses himself was not able to enter into the Tabernacle of the Congregation, when this Cloud and Glory first appeared, Exod. xl. 35.*

Ver. 12. *Then spake Solomon,] When he saw the Priests come out of the House of God in great Consternation, he uttered these Words which follow, with his Face turned towards the Altar, to compose and comfort them. This shews that the Cloud filled the House before Solomon prayed: Whereas in 2 Chron. vii. 1, 2, 3. it appears, the Divine Glory did not fill it, 'till after he had prayed. Which *Abarbinel* reconciles with very good Reason. The Cloud, in which was the Glory of the LORD, or the Fire, came into the Temple before Solomon prayed: Which made him say here, the LORD dwelleth in thick Darkness. Which he beholding, prayed to God, who gave such a sensible Token of his Presence there. Now when he had made an End of his Prayer, then the Fire that was in the Cloud broke forth, and consumed the Sacrifices on the Altar: And the Glory of the LORD filled the House, as it is recorded in the Book of Chronicles.*

*The LORD said that he would dwell in thick darkness.] As much as to say, be not afraid; but look upon this Cloud as a Token of God's Presence and Protection: And that he owns this for his House, where he intends to dwell, according to what he said, Levit. xvi. 2. This Cloud is called thick darkness, because it hindered the Sight of any other thing that was in the Holy Place; either the Altar, Candlestick, or Table. Nothing was seen but the Glory of the LORD when it broke out: Which dazzled their Eyes, rather than enlightened them. And it is observable, that the better to represent this, the High-Priest when he went into*



into the most Holy Place was to fill it with a Cloud of Smoak, by the Incense he offered, which made the Place dark (*Levit. xvi. 12, 13.*) that he might not lose his Life by the Splendor of the Divine Glory.

Ver. 13. *I have surely built thee an house to dwell in,]* He turns his Speech from them to God; and expresses his Hope that he would be pleased to continue in this House: Which he perceived by this Glorious Cloud he intended to make his Habitation.

*A settled place for thee to abide in for ever.]* Not like the Tabernacle, which was a moveable Habitation; but a Place wherein he hoped he would settle, and never remove from it. From hence the *Jews* call this *Beth-haolam*, the Eternal House, or the House of Ages. Which was not like *Gilgal*, *Shiloh*, *Nob*, and *Gibeon*, (as *Abarbinel* explains it) which did not last long, though God for some Time dwelt there: They not being in the Place which the LORD had chosen to place his Name there: Which was in Mount *Moriab*.

Ver. 14. *And the king turned his face about,]* From the Court of the Priests, to the Court of the Congregation, having the Altar on his Back.

*And blessed all the congregation of Israel:]* In that Form, perhaps, which God himself prescribed, *Num. vi. 23, 24, &c.*

*(And all the congregation of Israel stood.)]* Both out of Reverence to God, and Respect unto the King.

Ver. 15. *And he said, Blessed be the LORD God of Israel, which spake with his mouth unto David my father, and hath with his hand fulfilled it, saying,]* He acknowledges the Goodness of God in his gracious Promise; and his Faithfulness in fulfilling it. Which Promise was made by *Nathan*, unto whom the Word of the LORD came about this Matter, *2 Sam. vii. 4.*

Ver. 16. *Since the day that I brought forth my people Israel out of Egypt, I chose no city out of all the tribes of Israel to build an house, that my name might be therein;]* He had often told them that they should worship him in the Place which he would choose; but he never declared his Choice of a Place 'till *David's* Time, *2 Sam. vii. 6.*

*But I chose David to be over my people Israel.]* *2 Sam. vii. 8.* to whom he shewed the Place which he would make his Dwelling, and where he would be worshipped.

Ver. 17. *And it was in the heart of David my father, to build an house for the name of the LORD God of Israel.]* This is, as I said before, where God would dwell among them, and be graciously present with them. See *2 Sam. vii. 2.*

Ver. 18. *And the LORD said unto David my father, Whereas it was in thine heart to build an house unto my name, thou didst well that it was in thine heart:]* He accepted and commended his good Intentions, but would not let him put them in Execution. This Honour he reserved for his Son, as it follows in the next Words.

Ver. 19. *Nevertheless, thou shalt not build the house, but thy son that shall come forth out of thy*

*loins, he shall build the house unto my name.]* See *2 Sam. vii. 12, 13.*

Ver. 20. *And the LORD hath performed the word that he spake, and I am risen up in the room of David my father, and sit on the throne of Israel, as the LORD promised, and have built an house for the name of the LORD God of Israel.]* He concludes as he began, with a thankful Acknowledgment of the Faithfulness of God in performing his Promise.

Ver. 21. *And have set there a place for the ark,]* The Token of God's Presence among them.

*Wherein is the covenant of the LORD, which he made with our fathers,]* That is, the Tables of the Covenant: Which by a Figure are called *the Covenant*, because they contained it.

*When he brought them out of the land of Egypt.]* And told them that by the Tenure of this Covenant they were to hold the Land of *Canaan*.

Ver. 22. *And Solomon stood before the altar of the LORD,]* Having spoken the foregoing Words with his Face toward the People, and blessed them: Now he turned about again with his Face toward the Altar, to make a solemn Prayer to God.

*In the presence of all the congregation of Israel,]* Being advanced upon a Scaffold which he had made; of three Cubits high (as we read in *2 Chron. vi. 13.*) so that all might see and hear him.

*And spread forth his hands toward heaven:* Which was a solemn Posture of Prayer among other Nations. And it is evident both from that Place in the *Chronicles*, and from *ver. 54.* of this Chapter, that when he had stood a while with his Face toward the Altar, he fell down upon his Knees, and spread forth his Hands toward Heaven.

Ver. 23. *And he said, O LORD God of Israel, there is no God like thee in heaven above, or on earth beneath, who keepest covenant and mercy with thy servants, that walk before thee with all their hearts:]* He acknowledges the transcendent Excellencies of the Divine Majesty; and particularly again commemorates his Faithfulness to those who serve him sincerely.

Ver. 24. *Who hast kept with thy servant David my father that thou promisedst him: thou speakest also with thy mouth, and hast fulfilled it with thy hand, as it is this day.]* This relates to that Part of God's Promise to *David*, that his Son should build him an House. See *ver. 15, 16, &c.*

Ver. 25. *Therefore now, LORD God of Israel, keep with thy servant David my father that thou promisedst him, saying, There shall not fail thee a man in my sight to sit on the throne of Israel;]* He looked upon that as an Earnest he would fulfil the other Part of his Promise to *David*, which he made at the same Time, concerning his Kindness to his Posterity, *2 Sam. vii. 12, 13.*

*So that thy children take heed to their way, that they walk before me as thou hast walked before me:]* He speaks like a wise Man, who was fully acquainted with the Mind of God: Whose Promise concerning the Inheritance of the Kingdom, he acknowledges depended upon this Condition, *if they took heed to their way, &c.*

that



that is, continued in the Faith and Worship of God, as *David* did. But if they proved Idolaters, then they made themselves unworthy of this Privilege to the Seed of *David* (as *Abarbinel* speaks) and lost the Inheritance of the Kingdom, because they were none of his Children. And therefore after *Solomon* and *Jeroboam* also turned away from God and followed Idols, (as he goes on) God might justly have taken the divided Kingdom away from their Children. And when all *Israel* forsook the LORD, and worshipped the gods of the Nations round about them, he did forsake their Land, and would no longer dwell among them, nor continue the Kingdom to them.

Ver. 26. *And now, O LORD God of Israel let thy word, I pray thee, be verified, which thou spakest unto thy servant David my father.*] This is not an unnecessary Repetition; but (as *Abarbinel* notes) God, when he spake to *David* of building the Temple by his Son, promised two things. First, The Stability of his Kingdom in his Family, 2 Sam. vii. 16. and Secondly, That he would shew the greatest Kindness and Friendship to them; such as a Father doth to his Son, ver. 13. *Solomon* here begs of God in this Prayer both these Benefits: The first in the foregoing Verse, and the other in this.

Ver. 27. *But will God indeed dwell on the earth? Behold, the heaven, and heaven of heavens cannot contain thee, how much less this house that I have builded?*] He would not have the People possessed with such gross Imaginations as were among the Heathens; who fancied their Gods were confined to their Temples. No, saith *Solomon*, the Heaven it self, no not the highest Heaven, can comprehend his infinite Majesty.

Ver. 28. *Yet have thou respect unto the prayer of thy servant, and to his supplication, O LORD my God, to hearken unto the cry and unto the prayer which thy servant prayeth before thee to day.*] But he would have them know that God, who could be confined no where, was in a special manner present here, to grant the Requests of those who piously made their Supplications to him, as he now did, in this Place.

*Abarbinel* observes upon ver. 39. that *Solomon* uses three Words in this Verse, which in some Places signify the very same thing: But being all used here together, he thinks have distinct Meanings. For the Word *Rinnab* (which we translate Cry) he thinks signifies setting forth with a loud Voice the Praises of God: Concerning which their wise Men in *Beracoth* say, *Let a Man first commemorate the Praises of God, and then let him pray.* Then the Word *Tepillah* (which we translate Prayer) he thinks signifies Mens judging and condemning themselves before God for their Offences: Confessing they are unworthy to have their Petitions granted. And the other Word *Techinab* (Supplication we translate it) imports Mens Petitions to God for what they want, and deprecating his Displeasure, &c.

Ver. 29. *That thine eyes may be open toward this house, night and day, even toward the place of which thou hast said, my name shall be there.*] He prays that God would have a gracious Respect unto all that came to make their Petitions

there. For as in the former Verse (as *Abarbinel* observes) he prays God would hear his own Petitions: So in this, that he would hear all other pious Worshipers.

*That thou mayest hearken to the prayer which thy servant shall make towards this place.*] He beseeches God to hear him, if he looked towards this Place, in his Prayer; though he was not present at the Temple to prefer his Petition. For thus pious Men were wont to direct their Prayer, when they were far distant from it; nay, when the Temple was demolished, Dan. vi. 10. And when they were at the Temple, they could only look toward the most Holy Place: For the People came no nearer than into the outward Court of the Temple, and the Priests no further than to the next Court to it. Save only when they went to order the Lamps, and burn Incense Morning and Evening, and renew the Shew-bread: Otherwise they also stood and officiated at a Distance in the Court appointed for them, called the Court of the Priests. So both People and Priests stood in their several Courts, and worshipped with their Faces toward the Temple, where the Ark and Mercy-Seat were. From whence came the Expression of worshipping the LORD toward his Holy Temple: That is, toward the Place where the Mercy-Seat was. And also the Expression, of worshipping towards his Footstool: For if the Glory of the LORD sat upon the Cherubims, under which the Ark stood; then it was his Footstool. See *Psal.* xcix. 5. and cxxxviii. 2.

Ver. 30. *And hearken thou to the supplication of thy servant, and of thy people Israel, when they shall pray toward this place.*] Here, as the same *Abarbinel* observes, he desires, whether there was one, or many that prayed, he would hear them.

*And hear thou in heaven thy dwelling-place,*] He directs the People's Mind up to Heaven, the Place where he dwells in the highest Majesty and Glory: Of which the bright Cloud in the Temple was a Token and Resemblance.

*And when thou hearest, forgive.*] For Sins unpardoned would hinder his Blessing from descending on them; and therefore in the first Place he implores Forgiveness of them.

Ver. 31. *If any man trespass against his neighbour, and an oath be laid upon him to cause him to swear,*] This seems to relate to such as were accused of denying that which was said to be deposited with them by their Neighbour. Who were to purge themselves by an Oath, there being no Witness to convince them.

*And the oath come before thine altar in this house.*] It was the Custom of all Nations to touch the Altar when they made a solemn Oath: Calling God, that is, to witness the Truth of what they said, and to punish them if they did not speak the Truth.

Ver. 32. *Then hear thou in heaven, and do, and judge thy servants, condemning the wicked, to bring his way upon his head, and justifying the righteous, to give him according to his righteousness.*] He desires God to hear the Complaint of him who was defrauded, or unjustly accused: And shew who had Right on his side;



by punishing the Offender, and acquitting the injured Person.

Ver. 33. *When thy people Israel be smitten down before the enemy, because they have sinned against thee, and shall turn again to thee, and confess thy name,]* Acknowledge him to be God alone, and renounce all false gods.

*And pray, and make supplication to thee in this house :]* Or, toward this House : Expecting Help from God alone.

Ver. 34. *Then hear thou in heaven, and forgive the sin of thy people Israel, and bring them back into the land which thou gavest unto their fathers.]* Deliver them out of the Captivity into which their Enemies had carried them ; and restore them to their own Country. The Jews think the SCHECHINAH was always in Captivity with them, and brought them forth from thence.

Ver. 35. *When heaven is shut up, and there is no rain, because they have sinned against thee ;]* As God is said to bring the Wind (Psal. cxxxv. 7.) so he doth the Rain out of his Treasures : Which when he shuts up, no Showers can fall, 'till he open them again.

*If they pray toward this place, and confess thy name, and turn from their sin, when thou afflictest them :]* That had been the frequent Fruit of their Affliction in former Ages : Though as soon as God had delivered them, they revolted from him ; as we read in the whole Book of Judges.

Ver. 36. *Then hear thou in heaven and forgive the sin of thy servants, and of thy people Israel, that thou teach them the good way wherein they should walk,]* These Words are better translated in 2 Chron. vi. 27. (where the Hebrew Words are the very same with these here) *When thou hast taught them the good way wherein they should walk.* He doth not desire their Pardon, 'till their Affliction had taught them better Obedience.

*And give rain upon thy land, which thou hast given to thy people for an inheritance.]* He first desires their Amendment, and then that the Times and Seasons might be amended.

Ver. 37. *If there be in the land famine,]* Which arose sometimes from other Causes, besides want of Rain.

*If there be pestilence, blasting, mildew, locust, or if there be caterpillar ;]* These two Creatures, Locusts and Caterpillars, made great Desolations where they swarmed, Exod. x. 4, 5. Psalm cv. 34, 35. Mildew also, the Heathens themselves were sensible was a punishment sent from Heaven. And therefore Numa Pompilius (as Strigelius observes) ordained a solemn Festival called *Rubigalia*, in the Beginning of May, to pray for their Preservation from this *Rubigo* as they called it, which corrupted their Corn. See Pliny's Nat. Hist. Lib. 18. Cap. 29.

*If their enemy besiege them in the land of their cities,]* In their Gates : Whereby they were so straitned, that none could go in, or out.

*Whatsoever plague, whatsoever sickness there be ;]* The Word Plague signifies some extraordinary Stroke by the Hand of God.

Ver. 38. *What prayer and supplication shall be made by any man, or by all thy people Israel,]* Who in National Calamities were wont to be-

sech God's Mercies ; with publick Fasting and prayer : Which if they neglected he intreats him not to reject the Supplications of any particular Person who besought his Favour for himself and Family.

*Which shall know every man the plague of his own heart,]* We are taught by Ezra in 2 Chron. vi. 29. to understand these Words of any private Trouble or Grief which any Man laboured under : For so the Words are there, *when every one shall know his own Sore, and his own Grief.* That is, shall make his secret Moan for any Affliction which lies heavy upon his Spirit.

*And spread forth his hands towards this house :]* That is, pray as Solomon now did to God. See ver. 22.

Ver. 39. *Then hear thou in heaven thy dwelling-place, and forgive, and do, and give to every man according to his ways, whose heart thou knowest ;]* He would have the People know that God could not be deceived with Words ; but have them expect an answer from him, according to the Sincerity of their Hearts, in their Professions of Repentance.

(*For thou, even thou only knowest the hearts of all the children of men.*)] This Sense begets in Men the greatest Awe of the Divine Majesty.

Ver. 40. *That they may fear thee all the days that they live, in the land that thou gavest unto our fathers.]* That they might learn by his great Goodness, to worship him alone religiously all their Days : And by that means possess in Peace and Plenty, the good Land he had bestowed upon them.

Ver. 41. *Moreover, concerning a stranger that is not of thy people Israel, but cometh out of a far country, for thy name's sake ;]* To become a proselyte to the true Religion, and worship God alone, tho' he was not circumcised, and thereby bound to keep the whole Law. Such Strangers came to pray at the Temple, though they might not offer any Sacrifices, except only a Burnt-Offering. And therefore we may observe, that in the New Testament the Greeks are said to come to a Feast, *ἵνα προσκυνήσωσι*, that they might worship, not that they might keep the Passover, John xii. 20. and the like is said of the Eunuch, Acts viii. 22. See Selden Lib. 2. De Jure Nat. & Gent. Cap. 4, and 5.

Ver. 42. (*For they shall hear of thy great name, and of thy strong hand, and thy stretched out arm*)] All the stupendious Wonders he had done : Which declared him to be above all Gods ; the most High, and Holy One.

*When they shall come, and pray toward this place :]* In the Court behind that of the Israelites : Which was made on purpose for the Religious uncircumcised Gentiles. Such, faith Victorinus Strigelius (whose Words I think fit here to transcribe) were Naaman the Syrian ; Nabuchadnezzar, and his Son Evilmerodach ; Darius the Mede ; Cyrus the Persian ; Cornelius, and the Æthiopian Eunuch mentioned in the Acts of the Apostles ; and many such like Heathens : Who were Members of the true Church. By which means, and by the Dispersion of the Jews among other Nations, many



many Heathens were called to the Acknowledgment of the only true God. See *Josephus* his last Book of *Antiquities*, Chapter the second.

Ver. 43. *Hear thou in heaven thy dwelling-place, and do according to all that the stranger calleth to thee for:]* He had the same Sense with *St Peter*, that *God is no respecter of persons, but in every nation he that feareth God, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him,* Acts x. 35.

*That all the people of the earth may know thy name, to fear thee, as do thy people Israel,]* By this it is evident that truly good Men in ancient Time desired all the Gentile World might be incorporated with them: Unto which in our Saviour's Time the *Jews* were unaccountably averse.

*And that they may know that this house which I have builded, is called by thy name.]* Hath thy glorious Presence in it.

Ver. 44. *If thy people go out to battle against their enemy, whithersoever thou shalt send them, and pray unto the LORD toward this city which thou hast chosen, and toward the house that I have built for thy name:]* Some of the *Jews* wonder that *Solomon* should mix his Prayer for Strangers with those for the People of *Israel*, and not rather finish first what he had to desire for the *Israelites*, and then pray for the *Gentiles*. If there be any thing in this, it was to shew that God made no Difference between them and pious People of other Nations. It is here remarkable, that they were not to make War without a Warrant and Commission from God, upon the neighbouring Nations. Not to satisfy their Ambition and Vain-glory, but by his Command, or upon just and necessary Reasons; which would warrant them to implore and expect God's Blessing upon their Arms.

Ver. 45. *Then hear thou in heaven their prayer and supplications, and maintain their cause.]* Shews the Justice of it, by making them victorious.

Ver. 46. *If they sin against thee (for there is no man that sinneth not) and thou be angry with them, and deliver them to the enemy,]* The Weakness of human Nature, and its Proneness to sin, doth not excuse wilful Offences against God; especially Apostacy from him, which was the Cause of all their Calamities.

*So that they carry them away captives into the land of the enemy, far or near;]* A good Cause sometimes miscarries for the Iniquity of those that are engaged in it.

Ver. 47. *Yet if they shall bethink themselves, in the land whither they were carried captives, and repent and make supplication to thee in the land of them that carried them captives, saying, we have sinned, we have done perversely, we have committed wickedness;*

Ver. 48. *And so return to thee with all their heart and all their soul, in the land of their enemies, which have led them away captive,]* In these, and in the foregoing Words, ver. 47. he gives a full Description of true Repentance. Which begins in the serious Reflection which Men make upon their past Lives, and their present Miseries into which their Sins have brought them. Which begets an unfeigned Sorrow and

Resolution of Amendment, with earnest Supplication for Mercy and Grace: Confessing themselves unworthy of it, and condemning themselves for their Sins, and the high Aggravations of them (expressed here by *doing perversely, and committing wickedness*) which at last concludes in their quitting that wicked Course of Life, and their sincere Conversion to the Service of God.

*And pray unto thee toward the land which thou gavest unto their fathers, the city which thou hast chosen, and the house which I have built for thy name:]* The very looking towards this Place, with earnest imploring the Mercy of God, and Desire of his Helps, was to own him that dwelt here, and acknowledge him alone for their God. Which was a Means (as that excellent Person *Dr Alix* admonishes me) to keep them from Idolatry: All the Nations of the World turning their Faces towards the East, when they worshipped; but the *Jews* to the West, where the Holy Place was. And for this Cause, when the Temple and the holy City were destroyed, and the Ark of the Testimony was gone; yet good Men looked and prayed toward the Place where it was wont to be; as appears by the Prophet *Daniel*. And therefore *Solomon* much more supposes they would do so, when they were all standing. Which may seem, as *Mr Mede* observes, to have been done out of the use of all Mankind, without any special Precept to that Purpose; which is no where to be found: Nature having taught Mankind, as in their Addresses to great Persons, to look unto their Face: So in their Addresses to the Divine Majesty, to look that way, or toward that Place, where his Presence is more demonstrated than elsewhere. From whence he concludes, that to worship toward the Place, where there is any Sign or Specification of his Presence, is no Idolatry. See his Discourse upon *Psal. cxxxii. 7*.

Ver. 49. *Then hear thou their prayer and supplication in heaven thy dwelling-place, and maintain their cause,]* In the *Hebrew*, *their right*: Which they had forfeited by their Disobedience, but he prayed they might be restored unto upon their Repentance.

Ver. 50. *And forgive thy people that have sinned against thee, and all their transgression wherein they have transgressed against thee, and give them compassion before them that have carried them captive, that they may have compassion on them:]* Treat them mercifully while they continued their Slaves; and give them their Liberty to return to their own Land. *Solomon* enlarges much upon this in the following Verses, as a thing of the greatest Importance. Because he knew that they, as well as all Men else, were prone to offend God (ver. 46.) and might provoke him to expel them from this Land. Towards which the *Jews* now at this Day turn their Faces, when they pray to God: But to no Purpose; for it only demonstrates they have so provoked God by a Crime more heinous than ever was committed, that he will have no Regard to their Petition.

Ver. 51. *For they be thy people and thine inheritance, which thou broughtest out of Egypt, from the*



*the midst of the furnace of iron:] Wherein they wrought with cruel Labour; See Deut. iv. 20.*

Ver. 52. *That thine eyes may be open unto the supplication of thy servant, and unto the supplication of thy people Israel, to hearken unto them in all that they call for unto thee.]* He brings two Arguments for the Divine Compassion toward them. First, that it might not lose the Glory of what he had formerly done for them; and then that it might appear he dwelt in this House, and had Respect unto the penitent Prayers that were here made to him.

Ver. 53. *For thou didst separate them from all the people of the earth, to be thine inheritance, as thou spakest by the hand of Moses thy servant, when thou broughtest our fathers out of Egypt, O LORD our God.]* See *Exod. xix. 5.* Here he adds a third Argument; the peculiar Laws that he had given them; whereby they were distinguished from all People: In the Observance of which he beseeches him to preserve them. It was not a meer Angel that brought them out of Egypt, but the Divine *Angel* conducted them; to whom therefore this Prayer of Solomon's was directed. For the *SHEKINAH* or Divine Glory that settled in the Temple, and there was worshipped, was this Divine Person, and not an Angel personating God.

Ver. 54. *And it was so, that when Solomon had made an end of praying this prayer and supplication unto the LORD, he rose up from before the altar of the LORD, from kneeling on his knees, with his hands spread up to heaven.]* See Verse 22.

Verse. 55. *And he stood, and blessed all the congregation of Israel with a loud voice, saying,] Now he turned about again, with his Face the other way, from the Altar to the People.*

Ver. 56. *Blessed be the LORD, that hath given rest unto his people Israel, according to all that he promised: there hath not failed one word of all his good promise, which he promised by the hand of Moses his servant.]* He celebrates again the Faithfulness of God, which continued now, as it had done in the Days of Joshua. See *Josh. xxi. 45. xxiii. 14.*

Ver. 57. *And the LORD God be with us, as he was with our fathers: let him not leave us, nor forsake us:]* Of which there was no Doubt, if they cleaved stedfastly unto him, as it follows in the next Words.

Ver. 58. *That he may incline our hearts unto him, to walk in his ways, and to keep his commandments, and his statutes, and his judgments, which he commanded our fathers.]* This was the greatest Blessing he could ask for them; as the Means to preserve them in his Favour.

Ver. 59. *And let these my words wherewith I have made supplication before the LORD, be nigh unto the LORD our God day and night,] Be ever acceptable to him.*

*That he maintain the cause of his servant,] That is, of Solomon, and his Successors.*

*And the cause of his people Israel at all times, as the matter shall require:]* That is, according to his, and their Necessities.

Ver. 60. *That all the people of the earth may know that the LORD is God, and that there is none else.]* That by his signal Favours to the Israelites, all the World might be invited to acknowledge him to be God alone.

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Ver. 61. *Let your hearts therefore be perfect with the LORD our God, to walk in his statutes, and keep his commandments, as at this day.]* When they were perfectly free from all false Worship, and served God alone; as he exhorted them to continue still to do, with Sincerity of Heart.

Ver. 62. *And the king, and all Israel with him, offered sacrifices before the LORD.]* Which was a solemn Act of Worship; whereby they acknowledged him to be their God. And these Sacrifices seem to have been laid upon the Altar, before Solomon begun his Prayer; ready to be offered: And when he had done, Fire came from Heaven (as we read *2 Chron. vii. 1.*) and consumed the Sacrifices. Which was another Token of God's Presence in this House; as the Cloud had testified, and hereby was further confirmed: For the Fire from Heaven declared how acceptable the Sacrifices were that were offered in that Place.

Ver. 63. *And Solomon offered a sacrifice of Peace-offerings, which he offered unto the LORD,] Besides the Burnt-offerings before-mentioned.*

*Two and twenty thousand oxen, and an hundred and twenty thousand sheep:]* Which could not be all offered upon that Day, when he made his Prayer, but while the Feast lasted; which was in the whole fourteen Days, *ver. 65.* See upon *iii. 4.* The Heathen imitated these Sacrifices in their *Hecatombs*, which they offered of an hundred Beasts of a kind; as, suppose, an hundred Oxen, an hundred Goats, and an hundred Swine. They are described by *Julius Capitolinus*, in his Life of the Emperors *Pupienus Maximus*, and *Balbinus*; the last of which he saith, was so transported with Joy, being fuller of Fear, that he offered an *Hecatomb*; which was such a Sacrifice as this. An hundred Altars of Turf were raised in one Place, at them an hundred Swine, and an hundred Birds were killed. But if it were the Sacrifice of an Emperor, an hundred Lions, an hundred Eagles, and an hundred of other such kind of Animals were offered: But no such ravenous Creatures were ever offered to the true God.

*And all the children of Israel dedicated the house of the LORD.]* By this Prayer of Solomon, and by the Sacrifices, whereby all the People supplicated and gave Thanks to God, this House was set apart for God's Worship and Service. For then a Thing or Place is said to be *dedicated*, when it is first employed to that Use unto which it is hereafter designed. Concerning which see *Selden, Lib. 3. De Synedriis, p. 204, &c.*

Ver. 64. *The same day did the king hallow the middle of the court that was before the house of the LORD:]* That is, the Court of the Priests, which he did not consecrate (for that was done before) but employed it to holy Uses, and, as it were, honoured it by religious Acts (as *Mr Mede* speaks upon *Levit. xix. 30.*) And so the Name of God is said to be *hallowed* or sanctified by us, when we use it holily, and reverently. Thus they explain it in the *Gemara*, he *hallowed it*, that is, he set up another Altar there, as *L'Empereur* observes upon *Codex Middoth, Cap. 3. Sect. 1.*

*For there he offered burnt-offerings, and meat-offerings, and the fat of peace-offerings.]* In the middle



middle of the Court he erected several Altars, for the Reason following: And indeed the whole Court was little enough upon this Occasion, as Dr *Lightfoot* acknowledges in his *Book of the Temple*, pag. 192, 193.

*Because the brazen altar that was before the LORD,*] Near the Door of this Court.

*Was too little to receive the burnt-offerings, and meat-offerings, and the fat of the peace-offerings.*] Therefore by a special Licence from God, he set up other Altars; which were to serve only during this present Solemnity; when such a vast Number of Sacrifices were to be offered. But afterward no other Altar was to be allowed, but that one brazen Altar where God by *Moses* appointed all Sacrifices should be offered; that they might be preserved in the Worship of one only God. Therefore the *Jews* say these other Altars which *Solomon* erected were of Stone; which were soon pulled down again. But *Fortunatus Schaccus* hath said a great deal to make it probable that he did not erect any Altars besides the brazen; but sacrificed upon the Ground, *Myrothec.* 2. Cap. 56.

Ver. 65. *And at that time Solomon made a feast, and all Israel with him,*] Such Solemnities were usual among the Heathen, when they celebrated the Presence of any of their Gods, as the illustrious *Ezek. Spanhemius* hath observed upon *Calimachus* his Hymn to *Apollo*, ver. 13. where he justly makes Account that they derived this Custom from this famous Festival of King *Solomon*: Which *Josephus* sets out admirably. See *Lib.* 8. *Archælog.* Cap. 2.

*A great congregation, from the entering in of Hamath, unto the river of Egypt,*] *Hamath* was the utmost Bounds of *Judea* to the North, called afterward *Epiphania*; and by the Inhabitants at this Day is called *Hama*. Sometimes the Bounds of this Kingdom this way, are said to be the great River *Euphrates*; as by the River of *Egypt*, which was the South Bounds, is commonly understood *Nilus*. So *Nahal* is translated by *Jonathan* and the *Hierusalem* Interpreter upon *Numb.* xxxiv. 5. And indeed the Word *Nilus* comes from thence, for the *Hebrew* Word was anciently pronounced not *Nahal*, but *Neel*: From whence the Greek Νεῖλος, and the Latin *Nilus*, as *Bochartus* observes in his *Hierozæicon*, P. 2. *Lib.* 5. Cap. 15. But here the River of *Egypt* is that little Stream which discharges it self into the Sea, by the *Lacus Sirbonides*, between Mount *Casius* and *Rhinocolura*, the last Town of *Palestine*. It is called by *Joshua*, xiii. 1. *Sichor*, the same with *Nile*, because it was but a Branch from the *Alveus Pelusiæ* of that great River. See *Gen.* xv. 18.

*Before the LORD, seven days, and seven days, even fourteen days.*] It appears by 2 *Chron.* vii. 9. that the Feast of the Dedication of the Altar lasted seven Days; and then the other seven Days were the Feast of Tabernacles, which followed after the other.

Ver. 66. *On the eighth day he sent the people away:*] So *Ezra* likewise saith, 2 *Chron.* vii. 10. but adds that it was the twenty-third Day of the seventh Month: Whereas the last Day of the Feast of Tabernacles (which was the eighth from the Beginning) was the twenty-second. Therefore *Solomon* took his Leave of them

on the last Day of the Feast, which was the two and twentieth Day of the Month; and they went Home the next Day. By this also it appears, these fourteen Days of Feasting were not kept all together, without Intermision: For the great Day of Expiation was on the tenth of this Month; seven Days before which, I suppose, the Feast of Dedication was kept; and then they rested 'till the fifteenth, when the Feast of Tabernacles began.

*And they blessed the king,*] Gave him Thanks for his Kindness, and prayed God to make his Reign prosperous.

*And went to their tents joyful, and glad of heart, for all the goodness that God had done for David his servant, and for his people Israel.*] In the *Book of Chronicles* it is added, and unto *Solomon*: But that is here included in the Goodness of God to *David*, on whom God bestowed such a Successor. With whose magnificent Entertainment they were abundantly satisfied; and rejoiced exceedingly, that God had done such great Things for *David* and his Family; and made all *Israel* happy in the great Peace and Plenty which they enjoyed, together with God's holy Religion so gloriously established among them.

## C H A P. IX.

Verse 1. *AND it came to pass when Solomon had finished the building of the house of the LORD, and the king's house, and all Solomon's desire that he was pleased to do,*] We are taught by *Ezra*, 2 *Chron.* vii. 11. to understand these Words in this Manner; Thus *Solomon* finished the house of the LORD, &c. and concluded all with the foregoing Prayer, and the great Festival which he kept.

Ver. 2. *That the LORD appeared to Solomon the second time, as he had appeared to him in Gibeon.*] When he appeared to him in a Dream: And so it is said, 2 *Chron.* vii. 10. the LORD appeared to *Solomon* by night. Which he had done once before, and no more: For that which he spake to him, vi. 11, 12. was by a Prophet. See there.

Ver. 3. *And the LORD said unto him, I have heard thy prayer and thy supplication that thou hast made before me:*] This shews that the first Verse is to be understood as I have there observed; for otherwise, we must suppose this Appearance of God to *Solomon* was eleven Years after he had finished the House of the LORD. Which is not likely; but it is more natural to think it was the very next Night after he had dismissed the People.

*I have hallowed this house which thou hast built,*] By the glorious Cloud which came into it and filled it; and by the Fire which, descending from Heaven to consume the Sacrifices, testified his Acceptance of them.

*To put my name there for ever,*] Besides those visible Tokens of his Presence there, he now declares by Word of Mouth, that he owned this for his House; and would always dwell in it, if they kept his Covenant, as the *Targum* here interprets it.

*And*



*And mine eyes and my heart shall be there perpetually.]* By his *Eyes* and his *Heart* he means his gracious Providence, and his tender Love and Affection should always have Regard to what was done there; and it should be most acceptable to him.

Ver. 4. *And if thou wilt walk before me, as David thy father walked, in integrity of heart and in uprightness, to do according to all that I have commanded thee, to keep my statutes and my judgments:]* In all things relating to Religion, and Civil Government, which *David* commonly did: Though some Time, and in one Thing, he foully miscarried.

Ver. 5. *Then will I establish the throne of thy kingdom upon Israel for ever, as I promised to David thy father, saying, There shall not fail thee a man upon the throne of Israel.]* See 2 Sam. vii. 12, 13.

Ver. 6. *But if you shall at all turn from following me, you and your children,]* In the Hebrew the Words are, *if in turning you turn from me:* Which signifies more than their *at all turning from him.* Rather it should be translated, *if they altogether turned from following him:* That is, fell to Idolatry. For he did not intend to forsake them for every Offence; but only when they forsook him, as the next Words explain it.

*And will not keep my commandments and my statutes, which I have set before you, but go and serve other gods, and worship them;]* There was a general Corruption of their Manners, when they fell to Idolatry.

Ver. 7. *Then will I cut off Israel out of the land which I have given them;]* This shews that he speaks in the foregoing Words of a general Apostacy from him.

*And this house which I have hallowed for my name, will I cast out of my sight,]* No longer continue his gracious Presence there; which he had promised, ver. 3.

*And Israel shall be a proverb,]* So that when Men would express how unhappy any one was, they should say, *as miserable as the Jews.*

*And a by-word among the people:]* Who mocked at their Calamity.

Ver. 8. *And at this house which is high,]* Renowned for its Riches, and Splendor, and great Resort unto it.

*Every one that passeth by it shall be astonished,]* To see such a marvellous Change: For *Pliny* testifies that *Jerusalem* was the most famous City in the East, as *Grotius* observes.

*And shall hiss, and shall say, Why hath the LORD done thus unto this land, and to this house?]* Out of Scorn and Derision shall ask what is the Matter, that this famous Place, which boasted so much of the Favour of God, is laid in Ruin.

Ver. 9. *And they shall answer, Because they forsook the LORD their God, who brought forth their fathers out of the land of Egypt, and have taken hold upon other gods, and worshipped them, and served them: therefore hath the LORD brought upon them all this evil.]* The *Jews* were forced to give this Account of their Calamity.

Ver. 10. *And it came to pass in the end of twenty years, when Solomon had built the two houses; the house of the LORD, and the king's*

*house,]* The former of which was seven Years in building, the latter thirteen, vi. 38. vii. 1.

Ver. 11. *(Now Hiram the king of Tyre had furnished Solomon with cedar-trees, and fir-trees, and with gold, according to all his desire)]* See Chap. v. 8, 10. Where mention is made of these Trees, but nothing said of Gold: But in the fourteenth Verse of this Chapter we find that *Hiram* sent him an hundred and twenty Talents of Gold. Which it is not likely he gave *Solomon*; who rather purchased so much of him for Wheat and Oil, and such like Things which *Hiram's* Country wanted; tho' it abounded with Gold. For the *Tyrians* were great Merchants, fetching Gold from *Ophir*, ver. 27, 28.

*That then king Solomon gave Hiram twenty cities in the land of Galilee.]* They were near, or adjoining to the Country of *Galilee* (as the Particle *Beth* frequently signifies) but were no Part of the Land of *Canaan*, when it was divided among the *Israelites*: For that could not be alienated, being God's Heritage. They were therefore Cities out of the Territories of *Israel*, as appears from *Joshua* ix. 27. but had been conquered partly by *Pharaoh*, who gave them to *Solomon*, as Part of his Daughter's Portion; and partly by *Solomon* himself, who had Power to dispose of them; especially since at that Time they were not inhabited by the *Israelites*. See 2 *Chron.* viii. 2. and *Grotius de Jure Belli & Pacis.* Lib. 1. Cap. 3. Sect. 12. N. 3. *Hotoman* indeed, a famous Lawyer, thinks that *Solomon* did not give *Hiram* a Propriety, and perpetual Right in these Cities; but only the Possession and Enjoyment of them, 'till the Debt was satisfied, which *Solomon* had contracted, by the Assistance which *Hiram* afforded him, in building the Temple. But his Ground is not solid: For as our *Selden* also hath shewn (Lib. 6. de *Jure Nat. & Gent.* Cap. 16.) the Kings of *Israel* might dispose of those Lands, which they had conquered, in a voluntary War, without the Consent of the Senate. *Bochartus* also is of the same Mind, that these Cities were no Part of the Country of *Judea*: But *Abarbinel* confirms *Hotoman's* Opinion, that the Revenues of these Cities were given to him 'till the Debt was discharged.

Ver. 12. *And Hiram came out from Tyre to see the cities which Solomon had given him, and they pleased him not.]* Were not suitable to his Desire, and the Genius of his People; for the Soil being fat and very deep (as is generally thought) it required great Labour to till it, and was not pleasant to dwell in.

Ver. 13. *And he said, What cities are these that thou hast given me, my brother?]* These are not Words of Contempt; for it is not likely that *Solomon*, who had been highly obliged to *Hiram* (and was in his own Temper very generous) would give him that which was of little Value. But his Meaning is, these Cities were not such as would serve his Purpose; which made him return them to *Solomon* again (2 *Chron.* viii. 2.) who, no doubt, made him some other Recompence, which gave him better Satisfaction. *Abarbinel* thinks that *Solomon* having agreed to give *Hiram* so many Measures of Wheat and Oil, as are mentioned, ver. 11. with which he had supplied him every Year;



now that this Work was ended, gave him this Country, out of which he might raise this Provision for his Household himself. Which *Hiram* did not like, because his People were addicted to Merchandize, not to Agriculture: But did not upon this Account break off Friendship with *Solomon*, as appears by the following History.

*And he called them the land of Cabul unto this day.*] It is commonly thought that *Hiram* called them, by way of Contempt, *Cabul*; which signifies a dirty Country: Or, as *Josephus* will have it, *displeasing*. (as we translate in the Margin of our Bibles) For *Chabulon*, he saith, in the Phœnician Language signifies as much as *ἐκ δέσπον*, that which doth not please, *Lib. 8. Archæol. Cap. 2.* But the LXX seem to have understood the Word better; who translate it *ἔσπον*, the Term or Bound: As if *Cabul* were the same with *Gebul*; *Caph* and *Gimel* being frequently changed, as *Bochartus* observes; who approves of this Signification of the Word. For *Chabulon* was that Tract of Ground which bounded the lower *Galilee*: Extending from *Tiberias* unto this Place, as *Josephus* himself saith, *Lib. 3. De Bello Judaico. Cap. 2.* See *Bochartus* in his *Canaan*, *Lib. 2. Cap. 4.*

*Ver. 14. And Hiram sent to the king sixscore talents of gold.*] It may be better translated, and *Hiram had sent*, &c. See *ver. 11.* where the Reason is given, why *Solomon* offered him so rich a Country. Which though he did not like, yet these Words, *Abarbinel* thinks, signify that notwithstanding *Hiram* continued his generous Friendship with *Solomon*, and after that sent him all this Gold; or, it was sent him as his Share in their Traffick to *Ophir*, mentioned in the Conclusion of this Chapter.

*Ver. 15. And this is the reason of the levy which king Solomon raised*] That the raising of a great Tribute upon the People, and employing so many Men in his Works, might not seem strange, he here shews the Cause of it; which was his great and numerous Buildings; suitable to the high Dignity to which God had advanced him. But *Mr Selden* hath shewn, by many Instances, that the Word *Mas* is used not only for pecuniary Tribute; but for corporeal Labour. And thus he interprets these Words, *This is the cause of requiring the labour and work of so many men.* Which when he had declared, viz. his great Buildings; then he proceeds, *ver. 20.* to relate, who they were that he employed in this Service, *Lib. 6. De Jure Nat. & Gent. Cap. 14.*

*For to build the house of the LORD, and his own house,*] Of which an Account hath been already given.

*And Millo,*] Which was a large and very beautiful Place (as *Abarbinel* takes it) near to *Sion*; where the *Israelites* were wont to meet, and take their Pleasure: And because it was full of People, was therefore called *Millo*; which signifies *Fulness*, or *Repletion*. Now *David* had built round about *Zion*, from *Millo* inward (as we read *2 Sam. v. 9.*) but had left the Structure of *Millo* itself imperfect; which *Solomon* now compleated, with a particular Respect to *Pharaoh's* Daughter, whose House was near to it, *ver. 24.* of this Chapter. In this Place some

think there was a strong Fortress built, which they gather from *xi. 27.* and *2 Chron. xxxii. 5.* But others will have it to signify that deep Valley or Ditch (it may be called) which was between *Mount Sion* (the City of *David*) and *Mount Moriah*, on which the Temple stood. Therefore that there might be a convenient Passage from the King's Palace to the House of God, *Solomon* joined these two Mountains, by a Bridge or a Causeway; which could not be done without filling up the Valley, or making great Arches; some think the one, and some the other.

*And the wall of Jerusalem,*] Which was a great Structure. For there were three Walls, one within another, as *Abarbinel* and *Joseph Ben Gorian* explain it: The inner Wall compassing the House of God, and the House of the King; the middle Wall compassing the Houses of the Prophets, and great persons (which explains *2 Kings xxii. 14.*) and the third compassed the Houses of all the People.

*And Hazor,*] Which had been a very eminent City, and the Head of some Kingdoms before the Conquest of *Canaan*, *Josh. xi. 10.* and was given to the Tribe of *Naphtali*, *Josh. xix. 36.*

*And Megiddo,*] A City in the Tribe of *Manasseh*, *Josh. xvii. 11.*

*And Gezer,*] In the Tribe of *Ephraim*, *Josh. xxi. 21.*

*Ver. 16. For Pharaoh king of Egypt had gone up, and taken Gezer, and burnt it with fire, and slain the Canaanites that dwelt in the city,*] For the *Israelites* could not dispossess the *Canaanites*, but they continued in *Joshua's* Time, and after, to dwell in *Gezer*, *Josh. xvi. 10.* *Judges i. 29.* And it seems *David* and *Solomon* did not expel them, but continued them under Tribute; 'till *Pharaoh* upon some Provocation (which is not recorded) utterly extirpated them, and burnt their City. This was done, I suppose, before the Marriage of *Solomon* with *Pharaoh's* Daughter; and was the very first Expedition that the *Egyptians* made out of their own Country, as *Sir John Marsham* thinks in his *Can. Chron. Seculum 14.*

*And given it for a present unto his daughter, Solomon's wife.*] It is likely he had begun to repair the City: And now upon the Marriage of his Daughter, restored it to *Solomon*, who perfectly rebuilt it.

*Ver. 17. And Solomon built Gezer, and Beth-horon the nether,*] This is, having finished the building of *Gezer*, he built the lower *Beth-horon*, which was in the Tribe of *Benjamin* (*Josh. xviii. 13, 14.*) and *Ezra* tells us also (in *2 Chron. viii. 5.*) *Beth-horon* the upper which was in the Tribe of *Ephraim* (*Josh. xvi. 5.*) but not here mentioned: Either because it was not of so great Consequence, or did not need so much Reparation as the other.

*Ver. 18. And Baalath,*] There was a City of this Name in the Tribe of *Dan*, *Josh. xix. 44.* But it is likely this was a City near *Tadmor*, where *Baal* had been formerly worshipped: For *Baal* was one of the Gods of that People, it appears in the following Observation.

*And Tadmor in the wilderness,*] This Word *Tadmor* signifies in *Hebrew* as much as *Palma* in *Latin*. From whence it was called by the *Romans* *Palmyra*:



*Palmyra*: Which was one of the most splendid Cities in the Eastern Countries: Which gave Name to the *Palmyrenæ Solitudines*, mentioned by *Pliny* and *Ptolomy*. There have been lately, after Twelve Hundred Years Obscurity, several noble Inscriptions found in this Place by some that travelled into this Wilderness: But *Bochartus* hath one of far greater Antiquity of two *Phœnician* Gods, *Aglibelus* and *Melachbelus*, viz. the Summer and the Winter Sun: In his *Geogr. Sacra*, p. 2, called *Canaan*, *Lib. 2. Cap. 8. p. 811.* where he calls this *Tadmor* a City of *Phœnicia*.

*In the Land,]* Of *Hamath Zoba* (a part of *Syria*) as *Ezra* seems to expound it, *2 Chron. viii. 3, 4.* which Country *Solomon* had conquered.

*Ver. 19. And all the cities of store that Solomon had,]* Where he laid up Corn against a Time of need; or Arms and Ammunition, in case of War. Some will have them Cities where he kept his Treasure, which is not likely.

*And cities for his chariots, and cities for his horsemen,]* Which he had in great Number, *iv. 26.*

*And that which Solomon desired to build in Jerusalem, and in Lebanon, and in all the land of his dominion.]* So that whithersoever he went, he had an House for his Entertainment, in every part of his Country. Behold, saith *Abarbinel*, the Reason of the Tribute (*ver. 15.*) is given from all these Buildings: And after he had finished them, he laid no further Tribute upon his People: Who murmured at these Impositions, as we find, after he was dead: But in these publick Buildings, a great Number of Hands were employed, whereby Idleness was expelled, Manufactures were learnt, the Poor were relieved, all the meaner People exercised, Cities adorned, Diseases driven away, and no Place left for Envy and Sedition: While the Subjects found the Treasure that was raised, employed for the Benefit of so many of them; as *Bodinus* discourses in his Book *De Republica*, *Lib. 11. Cap. 2.* where he observes how *Augustus* having settled the Empire in Peace, kept the People in their Duty by this Means; repairing many Temples decayed by Time, or burnt by Fire: Laying out vast Sums upon the Chappel of *Jupiter Capitolinus*, and other publick Edifices; insomuch that he gloried, *he left Rome a Marble City, which he found a Brick,*

*Ver. 20. And all the people that were left of the Amorites, Hittites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites, which were not of the children of Israel,]* But by this Time were become, I suppose, Profelytes to the Jewish Religion, as the *Gibeonites* were, or at least renounced their Idolatry.

*Ver. 21. Their children which were left after them, whom the children of Israel also were not able to destroy, upon them did Solomon levy a tribute of bond-service unto this day.]* He was able to have rooted them all out, as the Law required; but that Command did not take Place after they had submitted, and made Peace with the *Israelites* (as those Words suppose, *Josh. ix. 19.*) And they seem now to have been in so poor a Condition, that *Solomon* did not lay any Tribute of Money upon them; but only of burdensome Labour. Of these were

the seventy-thousand that bare Burdens, and eighty-thousand that were Hewers in the Mountains; mentioned, *v. 15.* Thus *Mr Selden*, in the Place above-mentioned, explains these Words, *they were not able utterly to destroy*: Which was not for want of Power, but because they had made a Covenant with them, and did not consume them (as it is in *2 Chron. viii. 8.*) But they would not receive them into Peace with them, till they became Profelytes of the Gate: And when they had done so, they became Tributaries; and therefore such Persons, by vertue of their Covenant, *Solomon* now commanded to this Service. See *Lib. 6. De Jure Nat. & Gentium, Cap. 14.*

*Ver. 22. But of the children of Israel did Solomon make no bond-men:]* By this means he spared the Children of *Israel*, whom he did not employ in any servile Labours about his publick Works; but put them into nobler Offices, as it here follows. Yet this implies that his Royal Power might have laid such Loads on them, if he had not designed to rule with great Gentleness over them.

*But they were men of war,]* Which was accounted an honourable Employment.

*And were his servants,]* Officers in his Court.

*And his princes,]* Governours of Provinces.

*And his captains, and rulers of his chariots, and his horsemen,]* Commanders of his Guards.

*Ver. 23. And these were the chief of the officers that were over Solomons work, five hundred and fifty, which bare rule over the people that wrought in the work.]* In *2 Chron. viii. 10.* they are said to be but two hundred and fifty. For the *Hebrew* Doctors commonly say that there were of these Officers but two hundred and fifty *Israelites*: The other three hundred were Profelytes. But the plainest Account of this is given by *Abarbinel*, that there were only two hundred and fifty set over those that wrought in the Temple: The rest were employed in looking after his publick Works in other Places. And it must be observed also, that there were far greater Numbers employed when the Temple Work was carried on with great Speed, as we read before, *ver. 16.*

*Ver. 24. But Pharaoh's daughter came up out of the city of David, unto her house which Solomon had built for her: then did he build Millo.]* There was not the like Necessity for building *Millo* that there was for building the Walls of *Jerusalem*, and the Cities before-named: But he did it (as *Abarbinel* observes) in Honour, and for the Pleasure of *Pharaoh's* Daughter; who was to remove unto an House near to it. And the Reason she did not continue in the House where *David* had dwelt, we are told in *2 Chron. viii. 11.* which was, because it was a kind of holy Place, where it was not fit for her to remain; the Ark of God having dwelt there.

*Ver. 25. And three times in the year did Solomon offer burnt-offerings, and peace-offerings upon the altar which he built unto the LORD,]* The Meaning is not, that he offered Sacrifices no oftner; but that he never failed to keep the three solemn Festivals, which God commanded to be observed by every body, when he offered Sacrifices suitable to those great Mercies which were then commemorated; and to the



the great Blessings God had bestowed upon his Family.

*And he burnt incense upon the altar that was before the LORD:]* In the holy Place, before the Oracle. Where he could not burn it himself; but he gave it to the Priests at his own Charge, to be offered with a particular Respect to him. That it is likely he did every Day, Morning and Evening.

*So he finished the house.]* This was said before, but now repeated; because after he had kept the three great Festivals there, it was not only consecrated, but all Divine Offices had been performed in it; and there was nothing more to be added.

Ver. 26. *And king Solomon made a navy of ships in Ezion-geber,]* This Name *Ezion-geber* signifies *Spina Viri*; it lying in a rocky, ragged Shore, running out into the Sea like the *Backbone of a Man*. So *Arianus* (as *Bochartus* observes) in his *Periplus* describes the inmost Part of the *Sinus Arabicus* (where *Ezion-geber* lay) as very dangerous, because of the Rocks and Shelves. Which makes it less strange, that the Ships of *Jehoshaphat* were broken there in Pieces, in the very Port, before they put out to Sea, 2 *Kings* xxii. 48. Inasmuch that in after-times this Port was forsaken, and they frequented *Eloth*. *Josephus* will have *Ezion-geber* to be the same with *Berenice*, a City on the *African* Shore, over-against *Syene*; others have different Conjectures; when the Scripture plainly teaches us that it was a Port of *Idumæa*, not far from *Aela* upon the Red Sea; and not far distant from the Wilderness of *Sin*. For the *Israelites* removed their Camp from this Place to that Wilderness, as we read *Num.* xxxiii. 36.

*Which is beside Eloth,]* Or, *Eloth*, for it is called by both Names: And by the *Greeks* and *Romans*, *Aela*, and *Ailat*, and *Elat*, and *Elana*, &c. Which was a Port known in the Days of *Moses*, *Deut.* ii. 8. belonging to the *Edomites*; and, as *St Hierom* saith, to the *Egyptians*: For it was *ambigui juris*, lying on the Confines of both Countries. Inasmuch that *Sir John Marsham* thinks *Solomon* and *Hiram* now built Ships there with the good Leave of *Pharaoh*; the *Egyptians* now not minding Merchandize, but were set upon conquering Countries: But *David* having conquered *Edom*, 2 *Sam.* viii. 14. I rather think became Master of this Port; where *Solomon* built a Navy of Ships in his own Right, and went thither himself to see it, 2 *Chron.* viii. 17. It continued in the Possession of the *Israelites* about an hundred and fifty Years, till, in the Time of *Foram*, the *Edomites* recovered it, 2 *Kings* viii. 20. But it was again taken from them by *Azariah*, and left by him to his Son, 2 *Kings* xiv. 22. but lost again by his Grandson *Abaz*, from whom the King of *Syria* took it 2 *Kings* xvi. 6. The *Syrians* held it a long Time, till after many Changes under the *Ptolomies* and the *Seleucidæ* it came into the Hands of the *Romans*; who quartered there the Tenth Legion, as *St Hierom* tells us. See *Bochartus* in the second Part of his *Geographia Sacra*, called *Canaan*, *Lib.* i. *Cap.* 44.

*On the shore of the Red-sea, in the land of Edom.]* What the *Hebrews* call the Sea of *Suph*, other Nations call the Sea of *Edom*, from the Country

which it washes, viz. *Idumæa*; as appears from this Place. From whence the *Greeks* (not knowing the Reason of the Name) call it ἐρυθρὰν θάλασσαν, the *Red-sea*: The Word *Edom* signifying *Rubrum* or *Rufum*, Red, or Yellow, as *Bochartus* and *Ludolphus* have observed.

Ver. 27. *And Hiram sent in the navy his servants, ship-men, that had knowledge of the sea, with the servants of Solomon.]* The Navy was *Solomon's*, who had Servants of his own on board the Ships, to go and traffick at *Ophir*: But they had no Skill in Navigation, and therefore *Hiram* sent as many *Tyrians* as were necessary to man the Ships; they having been always bred at Sea.

Ver. 28. *And they came to Ophir,]* It is certain there was a Place called *Ophir*, or as the *LXX* call it ὀφίρ (which Word *Josephus* also uses instead of *Ophir*) and by others called Ὀρφίρ, which was in *Arabia Felix*. But this cannot be the Place here meant, as *Bochartus* hath demonstrated by many Arguments, in his *Phaleg. Lib.* 2. *Cap.* 27. This one is sufficient, that it was a three Years Voyage to *Ophir* here mentioned; whereas the other was very near the Place where the Navy was prepared. And besides, they fetched *Ivory* from *Ophir*, whereas there are no Elephants in *Arabia*; therefore we must search for it somewhere else: And there is little doubt it was in *India*: But in what Part of it, is not so easy to be determined. The famous *Bochartus* thinks it was *Taprobana*; which is the same with that now called *Zeilan* or *Seilan*. For what the Ancients say of *Taprobana*, that the Moderns say of *Zeilan*; as he hath shewn in a very large *Diagram* of both Countries, in his *Canaan, Lib.* i. *Cap.* 46. And indeed *Grotius* before him concluded, there was no better Way to guess where this Place was, than by considering what Commodities were brought from thence, and enquiring of Merchants (who have been in the remote Parts of the World) where not only Gold, and Silver, and precious Stones, but *Ivory*, and all the rest that were fetched from *Ophir*, are to be found now. And in a Letter to his Brother, he desires him to make this Enquiry for him. See *Epistol.* 483.

*And fet from thence gold, four hundred and twenty talents,]* It is said in 2 *Chron.* viii. 18. that they brought four hundred and fifty: But we may well suppose that thirty Talents might be spent in the Charges of the Voyage to and fro; so that only four hundred and twenty came to *Solomon's* Coffers. Or rather, as *Abarbinel* thinks, *Solomon* gave the Servants of *Hiram*, who managed the Ships, thirty Talents for a Gratuity. Or as *Laniado* (who delights to contradict *Abarbinel*) the *Jerusalem* Talent was bigger than that of *Ophir*: So that four hundred and fifty *Ophir* Talents made but four hundred and twenty *Jerusalem* Talents. It is easy also to say, that there came of Gold refined only four hundred and twenty into *Solomon's* Treasury; though the whole Mass was four hundred and fifty.

*And brought it to king Solomon.]* It is no improbable Conjecture of *Abarbinel*, that *Solomon* at first trafficked in the Ships of *Hiram*; which Voyage brought him for his Share the hundred and twenty Talents mentioned, ver. 14. of this Chapter: Which *Hiram* is said to have sent



sent to him, as the Profit (that is) of his Adventure. Which was so great that *Solomon* resolved to build a Navy of his own: At which *Hiram* was so far from being offended, that like a true Friend he furnished him with Mariners to manage the Ships; and they brought him this great Quantity of Gold at their Return from their first Voyage.

The Imperial Laws forbid noble Men to exercise Merchandise as a Thing below them: And therefore it much less becomes a King, as *Bodinus* discourses, *Lib. 6. de Republ. Cap. 2.* But we must not measure Antiquity by our own Times: And that Author well adds, that though he would not have Kings now to be Merchants, yet if he might have his Choice, *Mercatorem eum malo quam Tyrannum, &c.* I had rather a Prince should be a Merchant than a Tyrant; and noble Men should rather trade, than oppress and make a Prey of their Tenants.

## C H A P. X.

Verse 1. **A**ND when the queen of Sheba] *Josephus* thinks she was Queen of *Meroe*, which was anciently called *Saba*. But a great many of his Countreymen more rightly understand this Matter; who say she came from *Aljemin*; which was the South Part of *Arabia Felix*, near the Red-Sea; and so our Saviour calls her the *Queen of the South*, which is the Signification of *Femin* in *Hebrew*; and in *Arabick* with the Addition of *Al* is called *Aljemin*.

Heard of the fame of Solomon, concerning the name of the LORD,] *Theodoret* thinks she was a Religious Woman, as far as the Light of Nature guided her; and if we may believe the *Hebrew* Tradition, she had some Tincture of revealed Religion from her pious Ancestors: For they think she was descended from *Abraham* by *Keturah*; one of whose Sons begat *Sheba*, 1 *Chron. i. 32.* Now she came to hear of *Solomon's* Fame by the Ships that went to *Ophir*: For they sailed by her Coast, and in all likelihood spread his Fame there; as they did in all other Places where they touched; proclaiming his Magnificence, and especially his Wisdom, and his glorious Temple which he had built, for the Worship of his God. Whose Praise they set forth, as far above all Gods.

She came to prove him with hard questions.] To try whether he was so wise as Report made him; by propounding difficult Questions to him, which none but a Man divinely illuminated could resolve; as *Abarbinel* understands it.

Ver. 2. And she came to Jerusalem] The Fable of *Agatharcides* is confuted by this, which saith the Royal Dignity among the *Sabæans* was but a kind of Captivity. For after the Inauguration of the King, it was forbid, by an ancient Oracle, that he should stir out of his Palace upon Pain of stoning: But there he enjoyed himself in all manner of Pleasure.

With a very great train,] Royally attended.

And with camels that bare spices, and very much gold, and precious stones:] These Presents which she brought to *Solomon*, are a great Argument

she came from *Arabia Felix*; which abounded with such Things; but none of them are in *Meroe*: Nor can *Meroe* be said to be the Ends of the Earth; from whence our Saviour saith this Queen came; there being many large Countries in *Africa* beyond *Meroe*; but none beyond the *Sabæans* in *Arabia*, whose Country lay upon the Sea. See *Bochartus* in his *Phaleg. Lib. 2. Cap. 26.* Where he shews they abounded in Gold, having such Plenty of it from *Ophir*, that they exchanged it for Brass and Iron, &c. giving double, or thrice the Weight of them. And yet the *Abyssine* Christians (who say her Name was *Marqueda*) are very confident she came from their Country; where it is as constant a Tradition that she had a Son by *Solomon*; from whom their Kings are derived. So *Ludolphus* observes in his Notes upon the Confession of *Claudius* King of *Ethiopia*; where he saith, this was the Faith of his Father the *Israelitish* King.

And when she was come to Solomon she communed with him of all that was in her heart.] Had the Liberty to propound whatsoever she desired to be resolved about; either in Natural, I suppose, or Divine Things.

Ver. 3. And Solomon told her all her questions:] That is, answered them to her Satisfaction.

There was not any thing hid from the king, which he told her not.] There was nothing so secret, which he did not reveal to her.

Ver. 4. And when the queen of Sheba had seen all Solomon's wisdom,] Had fully discovered the wonderful Variety of Wisdom wherewith he was endowed.

And the house which he had built,] Both for God and for himself: The Magnificence of which was admirable.

Ver. 5. And the meat of his table,] Where it is likely she was entertained while she stayed at *Jerusalem*.

And the sitting of his servants,] At their Table.

And the attendance of his ministers,] Who waited on him at his Table, and in his Chamber, and other Places.

And their apparel,] Which was different, I suppose, according to their several Offices; but all very stately.

And his cup-bearers,] Who filled out his Wine, and brought and delivered it to him: With such Ceremony as made his Grandeur appear in that small Thing.

And his ascent by which he went up to the house of the LORD:] From his own Palace: of which *L'Empereur* gives an Account, upon *Codex Middoth, p. 50.* But the ancient Interpreters understand by the Word *Olatbo* not his Ascent; but his *Burnt-offering*, which he offered in the House of the LORD. And it is very likely, she saw the Service of God's Ministers in his House, as well as *Solomon's* in his own House: And was made by *Solomon* to understand the Meaning of every thing that was done there. Which must needs put her into an Extacy of Admiration, as it here follows. And thus the LXX translate these Words καὶ τὴν ὁ λοκαύτως αὐτῷ ἦν ἂν ἐφερεν ἐν αἰκῇ κυρίου, whom *P. Martyr*, *Victorinus Strigelius* and others follow in these Words, *Et holocausta ejus, quæ in domo Domini*



*mini offerebat*, and his Burnt-offerings which he offered in the House of the LORD.

*There was no more spirit in her.*] She was perfectly astonished. For as he discoursed of all Sorts of Natural Things; so he was no less skilful in Political Government; and transcended in the Knowledge of Divine Matters, as his Books shew us; having all Things likewise in such Order both in his House, and every where else, that it was amazing. A very great Man of our own observes, that such things as these, the Apparel, the Sitting and Attendance of his Servants, were justly admired by her as an Indication of Solomon's Wisdom. For *they are the Outworks which preserve Majesty it self from Approaches and Surprizals.* And whatsoever Prince departs from these Forms and Trappings and Ornaments of his Dignity and Prebeminence, will hardly be able, at some Time, to preserve the Body it self of Majesty from Intrusion, Invasion, and Violation.

Ver. 6. *And she said unto the king,*] When she had recovered her self out of her Astonishment.

*It was a true report that I heard in my own country, of thy acts, and of thy wisdom.*] They did not deceive her; who by their Reports of him, moved her to take this long Journey.

Ver. 7. *Howbeit, I believed not the words, 'till I came, and mine eyes had seen it:*] She thought they might magnify Things too much, as Travellers are wont to do; especially when they speak of their own Country.

*And behold, the half was not told me: thy wisdom and prosperity exceedeth the fame which I heard.*] This was very extraordinary: For commonly Men find Things fall far short of their Expectations.

Ver. 8. *Happy are thy men,*] His Subjects.

*And happy are these thy servants, which stand continually before thee, and hear thy wisdom.*] Especially those that were about his Person, and ministred unto him, who had Opportunity every Day to hear his wife Sayings and Discourses.

Ver. 9. *Blessed be the LORD thy God,*] One would think by this that she became a Proselyte before she returned to her own Country; whither she carried better Things than she presented to Solomon (which the next Verses mention) the Treasures of Heavenly Wisdom. *Philostorgius* indeed saith, that in his Time the *Sabeans* sacrificed to the Sun and Moon, and certain Dæmons of their own Country; and yet *ἐκ περιτομῆς τὸ ἔθνος*, &c. the Nation was circumcised after the Jewish Manner on the eighth Day. Which Rite they received, one would think, from this Queen, and retained it a long Time, though they continued their old Superstition. It is possible indeed that the Jews who lived among them, might persuade them to it. For the same *Philostorgius* saith, *ἐκ ὀλίγων πλῆθος Ἰουδαίων ἀποῖς ἀναπέρχεται*, no small Number of Jews was mingled with them.

*Which delighted in thee, to set thee on the throne of Israel; because the LORD loved Israel for ever, therefore made he thee king, to do judgment and justice.*] A most excellent Admonition both to the People and to the King; that they should think themselves highly obliged to God, who had given them such a King; and he should

think God made him King to govern his People justly. This Sense the wise Heathen had, that Governours were set over Men by God, for their Good: As *Aristotle* told *Alexander* in a Letter to him, wherein he exhorts him to keep him in Mind, that his Kingdom was given him by God for the Sake of Mankind, *εἰς εὐεργεσίαν, ἔ παρὸς θεῶν*, that he might do them good, and not abuse them.

Ver. 10. *And she gave the king an hundred and twenty talents of gold.*] Though we do not find that the Ancients speak of any Mines of Gold in the *Sabeans* Country; yet they abounded with it, being near to that *Ophir* which I before mentioned, and is spoken of in the Book of *Job*, xxii. 24. xxviii. 16. (in an Age when they were not acquainted with the *Indian Ophir*, which was very remote from them.) And several other Places there were also near to them, who had Plenty of Gold, as *Bochartus* shews in his *Phaleg*. Lib. 2. Cap. 27. p. 159, &c.

*And spices very great store, and precious stones.*] This Country was famous for Myrrh, Frankincense, and Cinnamon, (*Josephus* adds Balm also) as *Bochart* observes out of many Authors, in the same Book, Cap. 26. p. 149, 153. For their very Fires were made of Cassia, and Cinnamon. Precious Stones also he shews were so common in this Country, that they adorned their Cups, and their Beds, and their Stools, &c. with them. See him; p. 150.

*There came no more such abundance of spices, as these which the queen of Sheba gave to king Solomon.*] For it seems the Jews maintained no Trade with this Country.

Ver. 11. *And the navy also of Hiram that brought gold from Ophir,*] This is meant of *Ophir* in *India*, mentioned ix. 28. From which *Hiram's* Navy is said to bring Gold, though the Ships were Solomon's, because *Hiram's* Servants had the Management of them.

*Brought it from Ophir great plenty of almug-trees, and precious stones.*] It is very uncertain what these *Almug*, or *Algum*, Trees were. (as they are called by a Transposition of Letters in 2 *Chron.* ii. 8.) Our famous Dr *Castell* thinks it was the Wood called *Sanctulum*; which is proper for all the Uses mentioned in the next Verse, and is still in *India*. And R. D. *Kimchi* upon that Place in the *Chronicles* saith it was a Red-Wood which is now called *Brazil*. By which cannot be meant the Wood that comes from *Brazil*, for that Country was not known in his Days; but probably he calls it *Brazil* from the Hebrew Word *Barzel*, which signifies Iron; it being of such a dark Colour. And such a Wood there is now in the Kingdom of *Java*, as *Gouffet* observes out of *Thevet*, and other Authors, in his *Comment. Linguae Hebr.*

Ver. 12. *And the king made of the almug-trees, pillars for the house of the LORD, and for his own house,*] Or rather *Rails* (as we translate it in the Margin of our Bibles) which were made on either Side the Causeway which went up from the King's House to the House of the LORD. Compare this with 1 *Chron.* xxvi. 16, 18. and 2 *Chron.* ix. 11. and see Dr *Lightfoot* of the *Temple*, p. 125. where he only quotes *Rabag*; who saith he made *Battlements*, i. e.

*Rails*



*Rails on either Side, that Men by them might stay themselves; as they went along the Highway of that Ascent.*

*Harps also and psalteries for singers: there came no such almug-trees, nor were seen unto this day.]* This Account of *Almug-trees* is mixed with the Story of the Queen of *Sheba*, because she is said, *ver. 5.* to have admired the Ascent (as we translate it) which *Solomon* made to the House of the L O R D. Which appeared the more magnificent, because the Rails thereof were made of this rare Wood. Which *Abarbinel* fancies was *Coral*, which grows in the very Sea, and they had never seen before; nor did any come after.

*Ver. 13. And king Solomon gave unto the queen of Sheba all her desire, whatsoever she asked, beside that which Solomon gave her of his royal bounty:]* By their mutual Presents, which she made to him (*ver. 10.*) and he at her Departure made to her, they testified their Friendship to each other; desiring by these to be remembered. And *Solomon* desired to know what would be most acceptable to her, among all the Rarities she had seen, which he bestowed upon her: Besides, he generously added more Things of Value, which it is likely she had not in her own Country.

*So she turned, and went to her own country, she and her servants.]* Accompanied, it is probable, with many of the *Israelites*, who went and planted themselves there: From whom sprung those *Jews*, who, *Philostorgius* saith, were mixed with the *Sabæans* in no small Numbers, as I observed, *ver. 9.* But the *Jews*, of whom he speaks, were such as settled there after the last Captivity; and it was not lawful for a *Jew*, while the Temple stood to settle in a Place, from whence he could not come three times a Year to worship at *Jerusalem*.

*Ver. 14. Now the weight of gold which came to Solomon in one year, was six hundred threescore and six talents of gold,]* The History of the Queen of *Sheba* being ended, he returns to give an Account of *Solomon's* Riches and Magnificence; which he had begun to set forth before. And first he relates what a vast Quantity of Gold was brought into his Country every Year; not only from *Ophir*, but from other Countries unto which perhaps the Queen of *Sheba* opened him a Passage.

*Ver. 15. Besides that he had of the merchantmen,]* Who paid Custom for the Goods they brought from several Countries; or, as *Abarbinel* thinks, the *Men of Hattarim* (as the Words are in the *Hebrew*) signify a certain Nation, *viz.* the *Tartars* (as they are now called) who brought Commodities from the North Country to the People of *Israel*, as others did from the South.

*And of the traffick of the spice-merchants,]* There is no Reason thus to translate these Words, as the same Author thinks: But they signify in general all Sorts of Traders, who brought in Merchandize, by Sea or Land.

*And all the kings of Arabia,]* Who sent him Presents.

*And of the governors of the countries.]* Which *David* or he had conquered, and placed Governors there; who gathered his Tribute, and sent it to him every Year.

V O L. II.

*Ver. 16. And king Solomon made two hundred targets of beaten gold: six hundred shekels of gold went to one target.*

*Ver. 17. And he made three hundred shields of beaten gold; three pound of gold went to every shield: These Targets and Shields seem to have been made for State and Pomp; to be carried before him, upon some special Occasions. Though we do read in the Roman Authors of some great Captains to whom golden Shields were granted, as a Reward of their great Valour: And these perhaps might be intended for the same Purpose. But then we must not think that the Shields weighed but six hundred Shekels (which would have been so small as to be of no Use) but that each cost six hundred Shekels of Gold; as *Fort. Scacchus* observes, *Myrothec. 3. Cap. 3.**

*And the king put them in the house of the forest of Lebanon.]* Where it is likely he kept his most precious Treasure. See concerning this House, *vii. 2.* which *Josephus* saith the Queen of *Sheba* admired above all Things she saw in *Judea*: The vast Multitude of Cedar Pillars that were in it, making it look like the Forest of *Lebanon*: From whence some think it had its Name.

*Ver. 18. And the king made a great throne of ivory,]* We never read of ivory 'till about *Solomon's* Time; who, perhaps, brought Elephants out of *India*, and took Care to have a great Deal of Ivory brought with them. Inasmuch that we read of *Ivory Palaces*, *Psalms* *xlv. 9.* whose Walls were overlaid with Ivory; which was more precious than Gold in ancient Time, as *Pliny* tells in many Places.

*And overlaid it with the best gold.]* Not intirely, so as to cover the Ivory (for then it might as well have been made of Wood) but here and there; as *P. Martyr* reasonably conjectures. Which made the Throne appear more beautiful by the Mixture of Gold and Ivory; with which at due Distances it was studded. In this Throne he sat when he administered Justice, and gave Audience to Ambassadors, and the like.

*Ver. 19. The throne had six steps,]* Was advanced to a just Height, that he might be seen and heard by all.

*And the top of the throne was round behind:]* Making an half Circle over his Head.

*And there were stays on either side of the place of the seat,]* Like one of our great Chairs, which have Rests to lean one's Arm upon, on either Side.

*And two lions stood behind the stays.]* As their Supporters.

*Ver. 20. And twelve lions stood on the one side, and on the other upon the six steps:]* Upon every Step a Lion stood reared up, on each Side, as if he was falling upon his Prey: Which many Interpreters think had a mystical Meaning in it, as every thing else had belonging to his Throne; with which I shall not trouble the Reader. *Grotius* thinks he offended in making these Figures; and having once begun to transgress the Law, he grew still worse and worse.

*There was not the like made in any kingdom.]* That is, in those Times there was none to be compared with it; but in After-Ages there were perhaps more glorious. For *Athenæus* saith,

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the Throne of the *Parthian* Kings was of Gold, encompassed with four Golden Pillars beset with precious Stones, *Lib. 12. Deipnos.* And the *Persian* Kings he saith sat in Judgment under a Golden Vine (and other Trees of Gold) the Bunches of whose Grapes were made of several Sorts of precious Stones.

Ver. 21. *And all king Solomon's drinking-vessels were of gold, and all the vessels of the house of the forest of Lebanon were of pure gold, none were of silver; it was nothing accounted of in the days of Solomon.]* Who brought in such Plenty of Gold, that it made Silver of less Value while he lived.

Ver. 22. *For the King had at sea a navy of Tarshish, with the navy of Hiram:]* These Words are added to give a further Account how Solomon came to have Gold in such Abundance: For he trafficked for it, in another Fleet, besides that which went to *Ophir*. That Fleet, it is plain, was *Solomon's*, and sailed out of his own Port *Ezion-geber*, ix. 26. though it was manned by *Tyrians*, because they understood the Sea. Whereas this Navy here spoken of belonged to *Hiram*, and went out of his Port at *Tyre*; and *Solomon* had only the Liberty to trade in it to *Tarshish*. Which was a Place wherewith the *Tyrians* had very ancient Commerce; and therefore *Hiram* was the chief in this Voyage, as *Solomon* was in that to *Ophir*.

Once in three years came the navy of *Tarshish*, bringing gold, and silver,] It was not so far off, that they could not return in less than three Years: But, as *Abarbinel* supposes, they went thither in the End of one Year, and stayed there the next to vend and to buy their Commodities; and then returned in the Beginning of the third Year. *Bochartus* hath made it very probable that this Place was *Tartessus* in *Spain*, where Gold and Silver in ancient Times, if we may believe *Strabo* and others, whom he quotes, was plentiful. But I do not find any Proof that *Ivory*, *Apes*, and *Peacocks*, were the Commodities of that Country. See his *Phaleg. Lib. 3. Cap. 7.*

And *Ivory*,] The Hebrew Word *Senhabim* is of doubtful Signification: But the Word *Sen*, or *Shen*, certainly signifying a *Tooth*, Interpreters have supposed that *habim* signifies an *Elephant*; and both together import *Elephants Teeth*; i. e. *Ivory*. But it is hard to give an Account of this Word *habim*: Therefore *Bochartus* rather thinks that the whole Word *Senhabim* signifies an *Elephant*: Which best agrees with what follows, *Apes* and *Peacocks*; all three signifying living Creatures: And indeed *Ivory* itself in this Chapter, is simply called by the Name of *Sen*: Where he speaks of *Solomon's* Throne, ver. 18. See his *Hierozaicon, P. 2. Lib. 1. Cap. 20.*

And *Apes*,] The Hebrew Word *Kephim* is both by the Ancients and Moderns translated *Apes*: Which Creature *Pliny* calls *Cephos*; and saith they were seen but once at *Rome* in his Days, and that they came out of *Ethiopia*. So that if *Tarshish* was in *Spain*, they that sailed thither trafficked in *Africk* also before they came home. See *Bochartus* in his *Hierozaicon, P. 2. Lib. 3. Cap. 31.*

And *Peacocks*.] The *LXX* do not adventure to translate the Hebrew Word *Thuccijim*: But

The *Chaldee*, *Syriack*, *Arabick*, and *Latin*, translate it as we do, *Peacocks*: And so do the most Learned among the *Jews*, as *Bochartus* shews in a long Dissertation; where he probably guesses this Creature had its Name by a small Transposition of Letters from *Cuthajim*; as much as to say a Bird of *Cuth*, or a *Persian* Bird. Which Transpositions are so usual, that we have an Instance of it in this Chapter: The Trees here called *Almugim*, being called in the *Chronicles* *Algumim*. See *Hierozaicon, P. 1. L. 2. Cap. 23.* where he shews how beautiful a Creature this is; which might well be brought from foreign Countries to *Judæa*, where there were none of them.

Ver. 23. *So king Solomon exceeded all the kings of the earth, for riches and for wisdom.]* The latter of which he begged of God; who graciously promised to add the former; which he did to Admiration.

Ver. 24. *And all the earth sought to Solomon, to hear his wisdom, which God had put in his heart.]* That is, the great Men of the neighbouring Countries came, as the Queen of *Sheba* did, to be acquainted with his Wisdom; which they heard was a Divine Gift.

Ver. 25. *And they brought every man his present, vessels of silver, and vessels of gold, and garments, and armour, and spices, horses and mules,]* This shews that he speaks in the former Verse, of the great Men of the Earth; who made these Presents to him, when they came into his Country.

*A rate year by year.]* This seems to signify that they so highly prized his Wisdom, that they courted his Friendship; and voluntarily sent him a certain Present every Year, as a Token of the Continuance of it.

Ver. 26. *And Solomon gathered together chariots and horsemen:]* In a Time of profound Peace, he thought it a piece of Wisdom to be ready for War, as a Means to preserve the Peace. Though the surest Way to enjoy the Happiness wherein he lived, had been to observe strictly the Commands of God.

And he had a thousand and four hundred chariots and twelve thousand horsemen,] Four hundred of these Chariots, *Josephus* saith, were presented from the Kings and Princes before-mentioned: And he had a thousand of his own before. But what need was there for so many Stables for his Horses as seem to be mentioned iv. 26. viz. forty thousand? The Word is not *Stables*, but *Stalls*; every Horse having a Stall, not a Stable to himself: And some Chariots had two, some four Horses belonging to them. And yet even thus there were too many: Therefore we must suppose they did not always stand in one Place; but sometimes in one Country, sometimes in another. Where it was necessary there should be Stalls for them, when he removed from City to City.

Whom he bestowed in the cities for chariots, and with the king at Jerusalem.] The former Part of these Words relates to the Chariots, which were kept in the Country, in the Cities *Solomon* built for them, ix. 19. and the latter to the Horsemen, which were always with the King in *Jerusalem*; as *Abarbinel* understands these Words. Thus *Solomon* took Care they should not



not be burdensome to his People, by keeping them all in one Place: But they were distributed through the Country, only a great Body of Horfe in the Royal City.

Ver. 27. *And the king made silver to be in Jerusalem as stones,] As common as Pebles.*

*And cedars made be to be as the sycomore-trees, which are in the vale in abundance.]* Ordinary Things, like Willows, that among us grow numerously in low Grounds.

Ver. 28. *And king Solomon had horses brought out of Egypt,]* Here he again openly transgressed the Law of God (as *Grotius* observes) presuming he had no need of those Cautions, which were given against this by *Moses* in the Book of *Deuteronomy*, xvii. 16.

*And linen yarn:]* Most think *Byffus*, fine Linnen, is hereby meant; which was a great Commodity in *Egypt*.

*The kings merchants received the linen yarn at a price.]* It is acknowledged by all Interpreters that these, and the following Words in the next Verse, are very obscure.

Ver. 29. *And a chariot came up, and went out of Egypt for six hundred shekels of silver, and an horse for an hundred and fifty: and so for all the kings of the Hittites, and the kings of Syria, did they bring them out by their means.]* These Words *Bochartus* seems to me to have cleared with the greatest Perspicuity, by taking the Hebrew Word *Mikveh*, not for Linnen Yarn, or fine Linnen; but for the Toll or Custom that was taken for the Horses that were brought out of *Egypt*. And thus he translates the whole; *Horses were brought up to Solomon out of Egypt; and as for the Toll or Custom, the Merchants of King Solomon hired it at a Price* (that is, redeemed it of the King of *Egypt* for so much constantly) *and a Chariot coming out of Egypt went out for six hundred Shekels of Silver, and an Horse for an hundred and fifty; and so to all the Kings of the Hittites, and for the King of Syria, did they bring by their Hands.* The Sense of which Words is plainly this, that noble Horses being found in those Times in few Countries but *Egypt*, *Pharaoh* would not suffer them to be carried from thence without a great Tribute, which he exacted for them; which was six hundred Shekels for a Chariot, and a hundred and fifty for a Horse. This must not be understood to be the Price at which they were bought, but the Custom paid for them; otherwise every Horse would have been of the same Value, which is absurd. *Solomon* therefore bringing many thousand Horses out of *Egypt*, prevailed with his Father-in-Law to free him from this grievous Tribute, and to accept of a certain Sum of Money to be paid him every Year instead of it. Thus being freed from the Custom, which was demanded of all others; all the Kings of the *Hittites* and *Syrians* bought their Chariots and Horses of *Solomon's* Merchants, who could afford to sell them cheaper than they could have them in *Egypt*. See *Hieroicoicon*, P. 2. Lib. 2. Cap. 9.

By the Kings of the *Hittites* are meant the Rulers of some of that Nation, who were driven out by the *Israelites*; and lived in the North-East of the Land of *Canaan*, or in some Part of *Arabia*. See *Judges* i. 26.

V O L. II.

## C H A P. XI.

Verse 1. **A**ND king Solomon loved many strange women (together with the daughter of *Pharaoh*.) It was not a Fault in him that he married *Pharaoh's* Daughter; she being a Profelyte, as is generally supposed, to the *Jewish* Religion. But in marrying so many other Women besides, he committed two Sins against the Law; one in multiplying Wives, and another in marrying those of strange Nations, who still retained their idolatrous Religion; which was expressly against their Law, as the next Verse declares it. The *Jewish* Doctors indeed are so very desirous to excuse *Solomon*, that they say these strange Women were profelyted: But Mr *Selden* well observes, that then it had been no Sin to have married with some of them; and yet *Nehemiah* says it was a Sin, xiii. 26. Lib. 5. De Jure Nat. & Gen. Cap. 15. p. 625, 626. And *Buxtorf*. de Sponsal. & Divort. p. 40, 41.

*Women of the Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, Zidonians, and Hittites:]* Some think *Solomon* would not have taken Wives out of these Nations, had it not been out of some political Principle: Which some think was that he might by their Means gain Intelligence of the State of those Countries: Others, that he might extinguish the old Enmity which was between the *Israelites* and those Nations; to which he might probably hope to put an End, by contracting these Marriages with them. But good Intentions will not justify the doing unlawful Things.

Ver. 2. *Of the nations concerning which the L O R D said unto the children of Israel, ye shall not go in to them, neither shall they come in unto you; for surely they will turn away your heart after their gods.]* This relates particularly to the *Hittites* and the *Zidonians* before-mentioned; and consequently the rest of the seven Nations of *Canaan*, with whom they were forbidden to make any Marriage, (*Exod.* xxxiv. 16. *Deut.* vii. 3.) for the weighty Reason here mentioned. For though they might marry Wives of other Nations, if they embraced the *Jewish* Religion; yet of the seven Nations of *Canaan* they might not, thought they were converted to their Religion. Lest the Venom might lurk and lie hid; and at last break out, and infect them. Great was the Foresight of *Moses* (wherewith God endowed him) in giving this Precept (as *Grotius* notes) for the not observing it undid the *Israelites*, and was the Foundation of their utter Ruin.

*Solomon clave unto these in love.]* He not only married them, but had a great Affection to them; whereby his Heart was easily alienated from God.

Ver. 3. *And he had seven hundred wives, princesses; and three hundred concubines:]* Of these Princesses, few or none had the Name of Queens, as *Abarbinel* observes; but they only who were of the highest Esteem with him, or who were of Royal Extraction. He thinks *Solomon* enjoyed every one of these once, and then shut them up, that no body might touch them afterwards. See *Buxtorf*. De Sponsal. & Divort.



p. 48, 49. and *Hacksplan's* Miscellanies, *Lib. i. Cap. 6.* But it seems to me more probable, that he kept so many Wives meerly for State and Pomp; after the manner of the Eastern Princes; but never used many of them. Just as they do now in *China*, where the Emperor hath a great Multitude of Wives, chosen out of the prime Beauties of the Country: Many of which he never saw in his Life; as *Father la Compte* tells us in his *History of China*, *P. i. pag. 62.* The same is said of the great *Mogul*, that he hath as many Women as will make up a full Thousand (which is *Solomon's* Number) as the Author of the *Voyage to the Indies* tells us, in the End of *P. le Vall's* History, *Sect. 20. p. 496.* It must be considered also that *Solomon* had not brought them to this Number in the Beginning of his Reign, but toward the latter End; when his Riches increasing, he made vast Expences, and studied to out-do all other Kings, in Magnificence of all kinds.

*And his wives turned away his heart.]* He was so delighted in their Company, that they turned away his Thoughts from serious Business; yea, from God himself.

*Ver. 4. For it came to pass when Solomon was old, that his wives turned away his heart after other gods:]* For indulging himself too much in Pleasure, he weakened both his Body and his Mind: And growing old betime, began to dote upon other Gods; which he suffered his Wives to worship privately, and at last openly to exercise the religious Rites of their own Country.

*And his heart was not perfect with the LORD his God, as was the heart of David his father.]* He did not forsake the LORD, but joined other Gods with him. Which a Man of his Sense could never have done (who had so solemnly acknowledged in his Prayer, that there was no God like to the LORD, yea, that there was no God else, *viii. 23, 60.*) if his Mind had not been enervated, and his Understanding darkened by sensual Pleasures.

*Ver. 5. And Solomon went after Ashtoreth the goddess of the Zidonians,]* He worshipped *Astarte*, of which see in the Book of *Judges*, *ii. 13.* and *1 Sam. vii. 3, 4.*

*And after Milcon the abomination of the Ammonites.]* This God was the same with *Moloch*; whom he calls an Abomination, because highly detested by God: Who had given them a particular Caution against worshipping the Host of Heaven, *Deut. iv. 10.* Now *Moloch* signifies the Prince of that Host, as I may call it, the Sun; the King of Heaven, as the Moon was called the Queen: In this all agree that *Moloch* comes from *Melech*, which in the Hebrew Language signifies a King, and is of the same Import with *Baal* and *Adonis* (which signify Lord) which were worshipped by many Nations, as *Moloch* was: Who was not the peculiar God of the *Ammonites*; but the God whom they principally worshipped.

*Ver. 6. And Solomon did evil in the sight of the LORD, and went not fully after the LORD as David his father did.]* And yet *Abarbinel* thinks he did not commit Idolatry by offering Sacrifices to these false Gods; but was only persuaded by his Wives so far as to learn the Manner after which they worshipped their Gods,

by being present at the Rites of their Religion. Which was a dangerous Piece of Learning; which he might have known without being present at their Sacrifices.

*Ver. 7. Then did Solomon build an high place for Chemosh the abomination of Moab,]* Concerning *Chemosh* I have said enough elsewhere. See *Numb. xxi. 29.*

*In the hill that is before Jerusalem;* He set up an Altar upon the Mount of Olives; where all the City of *Jerusalem* might see what they did. This contradicts *Abarbinel*, and shews he was more than a Spectator of their Worship: Which he encouraged by building an Altar for it. And indeed that Author is much to blame in abusing his excellent Parts, to find Excuses\* for such a foul Crime.

*And for Molech the abomination of the children of Ammon.]* In the same Place, I suppose, *Moloch* was worshipped: For he would not adventure to permit strange Worship to be exercised in *Jerusalem* it self; though his Posterity did. And so from little Beginnings followed great Mischiefs.

*Ver. 8. And likewise did he for all his strange wives, which burnt incense, and sacrificed unto their gods.]* For what was granted to one, the rest would be apt to claim; or else complain of Unkindness to them. It is an astonishing thing that a Man of his Wisdom should not rather have converted them all to his Religion, than be seduced by them so much as to favour theirs. But he took no Pains with them, having given up himself wholly to his Pleasures; and growing conceited perhaps of his great Wisdom, thought he could reconcile his Religion with theirs; and find a good Meaning in all their Superstitions. *Abarbinel* observes in several Places, that it is never said *Pharaoh's* Daughter turned away his Heart from the LORD, or that he set up an Altar for her: Which is an Argument she was proselyted to the true Religion, and continued in it. As the rest might have been, if he had made it his Business, and had not grown indifferent; and thought all Religions alike. Which hath been the Disease of some great Wits.

*Ver. 9. And the LORD was angry with Solomon, because his heart was turned from the LORD God of Israel, which had appeared to him twice.]* First at *Gibeon*, in the Beginning of his Reign, *iii. 5.* and then at *Jerusalem* after the building of the Temple, *ix. 2.* There was another Time when a Message came to him, by the Word of the LORD, *vi. 12.* But we do not read that God appeared to him more than twice; which was enough to establish him in his Faith, Fear, and Love.

*Ver. 10. And had commanded him concerning this thing, that he should not go after other gods:]* For in both those Visions the Happiness God promised him, was declared to depend upon his Observation of God's Statutes, as *David* his Father did. See *iii. 14. ix. 4, 5.* And when he had begun to build the Temple, he admonished him, that he had better desist, than go on in that Work, unless he intended to keep all his Commandments, *vii. 12, 13.*

*But he kept not that which the LORD commanded.]* Which was the greater Crime, because



because he had so oft admonished him of his Duty, and done such great things for him.

Ver. 11. *Wherefore the LORD said unto Solomon,*] Either by some Prophet, or by a Vision: Wherein he appeared to him as terribly, as before he had done kindly, and pronounced this Doom upon him. The former I think is most probable, that God would not vouchsafe to appear to him any more; but sent this Message by *Abijah*, or some other Prophet.

*Forasmuch as thou hast done this, and thou hast not kept my covenant, and my statutes which I commanded thee, I will surely rend the kingdom from thee, and give it unto thy servant.*] Tear it in pieces, and give the greater Part of it to one of his own Subjects, viz. *Jeroboam*. This was enough to astonish any Man, to hear that all his Splendor should be so soon eclipsed, if he were not perfectly stupified: And it is likely it did make him reflect upon his Folly; and, as many think, moved him to write the Book of *Ecclesiastes*.

Ver. 12. *Notwithstanding in thy days I will not do it, for David thy father's sake: but I will rend it out of the hand of thy son.*] Though this was some Mitigation of the Punishment, that in his Days the Kingdom should continue entire; yet he humbled him by letting him know this Favour was not granted for his sake, but for his Father's, who had served him faithfully.

Ver. 13. *Howbeit, I will not rend away all the kingdom; but will give one tribe to thy son, for my servant David's sake,*] In Memory also of *David's* faithful Service, he adds another Mitigation of the Punishment: That the whole Kingdom should not be torn from his Son, but he would leave him one Tribe, over which he should reign: Which was that of *Judah*, unto which *Benjamin* was an Appendix, being much mixed with it.

*And for Jerusalem's sake which I have chosen,*] To be the Place of his Habitation, in the Temple built there by *Solomon*: Which he would suffer to remain to his Posterity.

Ver. 14. *And the LORD stirred up an adversary unto Solomon, Hadad the Edomite: he was of the king's seed in Edom.*] Though God did not execute the formentioned Threatning 'till after his Death, yet he began to afflict *Solomon* by raising up three Adversaries against him; who disturbed his Repose, in his old Age, when he most desired to be quiet. The first of them is here mentioned; who had a mortal Hatred to *Solomon*, ever since the Death of *David*, who had endeavoured to destroy him with every Male in the Country. But God restrained his Wrath from attempting any thing against *Solomon*, as long as he observed God's Commands.

Ver. 15. *For it came to pass, when David was in Edom,*] To conquer the Country: Which he did intirely, and put Garrisons into it, 2 Sam. viii. 14. 1 Chron. xviii. 12, 13.

*And Joab the captain of the host was gone up to bury the slain,*] It is not to be supposed that the *Edomites* slew none of the *Israelites*, in the Defence of their Country: And those are they,

it is probable, unto whom *Joab*, after he had done his Business, went up to give an honourable Interment.

*After he had smitten every male in Edom:*] That is, all he could find: For some fled, as *Hadad* did.

Ver. 16. *(For six months did Joab remain there, with all Israel,*] That is, with all his Army.

*Until he had cut off every male in Edom.)*] Intending to extirpate the Nation.

Ver. 17. *Then Hadad fled, he and certain Edomites of his fathers servants with him, to go into Egypt; Hadad being yet a little child.*] He being very young, some of his Father's Servants took him and hid him, and themselves with him, in some secret Place: And when *Joab* was busy in giving a solemn Burial to the *Israelites*, they took that Opportunity to carry *Hadad* into Egypt.

Ver. 18. *And they arose out of Midian,*] But first they went into *Midian*, that they might send from thence to know if *Pharaoh* would give them Entertainment and Protection.

*And came to Paran,*] Which was in the way to Egypt. For the Wilderness of *Paran* lay between *Edom* and Egypt.

*And they took men with them,*] To attend *Hadad*; that he might appear like a young Prince.

*And they came to Egypt unto Pharaoh king of Egypt.*] He invited him not only to come into his Country, but to his own Palace.

*Which gave him an house, and appointed him a table, and gave him land.*] According to the manner of generous Princes, who pity noble Persons that are in Distress, *Pharaoh* not only assigned him an House, and kept a Table for him, that he might want nothing; but moreover gave him Land, that out of its Revenues he might provide himself an Equipage suitable to his Quality.

Ver. 19. *And Hadad found great favour in the eyes of Pharaoh, so that he gave him to wife the sister of his own wife; the sister of Tahpenes the queen.*] This argues an high Esteem of him, for the princely Qualities which it is likely appeared in him: Though sometimes the Affections of Kings are unaccountable, and they prefer those who do not deserve it.

Ver. 20. *And the sister of Tahpenes bare him Genubath his son, whom Tahpenes weaned in Pharaohs house:*] The Queen had as great a Fondness for the Child, as the King had for his Father; and would have him nursed and weaned in *Pharaoh's* Palace.

*And Genubath was in Pharaohs household, among the sons of Pharaoh.*] He was educated among the King's Children, as if he had been of them: Which gave *Hadad*, no doubt, great Reputation.

Ver. 21. *And when Hadad heard in Egypt that David slept with his fathers, and that Joab the captain of the host was dead,*] Whom he dreaded more than *David*; having done that terrible Execution upon his Country, of destroying their Males for six Months together.

*Hadad said to Pharaoh, Let me depart, that I may go to my own country.*] Which he hoped to recover, now that the great Enemies of it were dead, and *Solomon* young.

Ver. 22.



Ver. 22. *Then Pharaoh said unto him, But what hast thou lacked with me, that thou seekest to go to thine own country? And he answered, Nothing: Howbeit, let me go in any wise.*] Nothing would satisfy him, but to go and attempt the regaining the Dominion of *Edom*. Which some fancy he did by the Intercession of *Pharaoh*: Who persuaded *Solomon* to let him reign in *Edom*, paying him a Tribute; which now in the End of *Solomon's* Reign he denied to pay, and rebelled against him. But this proceeds upon a Supposition, that when *David* died, *Solomon* was married, which is not true. Nor is it certain that he was the same *Pharaoh* whose Daughter *Solomon* married, that had been so kind as to educate *Hadad*. It seems to me more likely that though *Hadad* ventured to his own Country, he durst not attempt any thing, 'till *Solomon* began to decline in the Favour of God, and of his People too. For if *Hadad* had moved any Change of Government, *Solomon* had Forces enough to suppress him; and in his vigorous Age, no doubt would have done it; he being so great a Prince, and having so many Chariots and Horsemen always ready, that I am apt to think *Hadad* did not so much as enter into his own Country, but lived somewhere near it; watching an Opportunity to get Possession of it; which he found in the Conclusion of *Solomon's* Reign.

Ver. 23. *And God stirred him up another adversary, Rezon the son of Eliadah, which fled from his lord Hadadezer king of Zobab.*] When he saw his Army beaten by King *David*, 2 Sam. viii. 3.

Ver. 24. *And he gathered men unto him, and became captain over a band, when David slew them of Zobab:*] Some of those that fled, when *David* defeated *Hadadezer*, listed themselves under *Rezon*; who became their Commander. And it is probable, he lived after the manner of the *Arabians*, by Plunder and Robbery, all the Days of *David*, and the best part of *Solomon's* Reign.

*And they went to Damascus and dwelt therein, and reigned in Damascus.*] Not in the Days of *David*: Who had put a Garrison into *Damascus*, and brought the People under Tribute, 2 Sam. viii. 5, 6. And so they continued subject unto *Solomon*; 'till he, doting upon strange Women, minded not the Defence of his Conquests. Which *Rezon* took the Advantage of, and invaded and got Possession of *Damascus*: And reigned there, as *Hadad* did in *Edom*.

Ver. 25. *And he was an adversary to Israel all the days of Solomon.*] This is not to be understood of the whole Reign of *Solomon*, which for the most part was peaceable (as was observed before, iv. 20, 25.) but of all the Days which remained of his Life, from the Time that his Wives publicly exercised their Idolatry, unto the Day of his Death.

*Beside the mischief that Hadad did:*] This signifies, as *Abarbinel* thinks, that *Rezon* durst not have rebelled against *Solomon*, if *Hadad* had not led him the way: But seeing what Success he had in *Edom*, he and his Men seized on *Damascus*.

*And he abhorred Israel, and reigned over Syria.*] In Combination with *Hadad* he defied *Israel*:

And made himself King not only of *Damascus*, but over all the Country thereabout.

Ver. 26. *And Jeroboam the son of Nebat, an Ephrathite of Zereda, Solomon's servant,*] In a publick Employment.

*(Whose mother's name was Zeruah, a widow-woman) even he lift up his hand against the king.*] Not against King *Solomon*, that we read of, but against his Son; to whom he gave great Disturbance, as soon as *Solomon* was dead.

Ver. 27. *And this was the cause that he lift up his hand against the king. Solomon built Millo, and repaired the breaches of the city of David his father.*] This was the Occasion of *Jeroboam's* Advancement, as it follows in the next Verse. For *Solomon* being engaged in many Buildings, chose fitting Persons to oversee his Works; among which *Jeroboam* was one. Who took this Opportunity to work in the People a Disaffection to *Solomon*, and his Government, as *Abarbinel* and others of the *Jews* imagine. For he represented, say they, the Building of *Millo*, as a Work of Vanity, only to gratify *Pharaoh's* Daughter: And the Breaches of the City of *David* they take to have been only open Places, at which People might enter and come easily many Ways to the King's Palace; whereas being stopped up by *Solomon*, Access was not so easy, but they were forced to go about. This was represented as a Grievance; especially since such heavy Burdens were laid upon the People, to maintain these Expences. But the Text suggests nothing of this.

Ver. 28. *And the man Jeroboam was a mighty man of valour:*] Of great Courage, and Strength of Body.

*And Solomon seeing the young man that he was industrious,*] Very diligent in the Business wherein he had employed him, of looking over his Works.

*He made him ruler over all the charge of the house of Joseph.*] Gave him greater Preferment; which was to look after the Revenue of a whole Province; the Tribe of *Ephraim*, and, as some think, *Manasseh* also. This was an high Obligation upon him; but it made him, the *Hebrew* Doctors think, only more presumptuous to instil Discontent into the People; who were unnecessarily burdened to support *Solomon's* Vanity, in such vast Buildings as he undertook. If *Jeroboam* was guilty of joining with the People in their Murmurings, and increasing them, this cannot properly be called *lifting up the Hand*, that is, rebelling against *Solomon*: But was a Preparation for it, and disposed the People to the Revolt, which afterward followed.

Ver. 29. *And it came to pass at that time, when Jeroboam went out of Jerusalem;*] Where he had been, it is likely, to give up his Accounts; and was returning to his Charge.

*That the prophet Abijah the Shilonite found him in the way:*] Met with him, as he was going along. Some of the *Jewish* Doctors will have this Prophet to be one of those who came out of *Egypt* with *Moses*; and therefore must be five hundred Years old. See *Selden, Lib. 2. De Synedr. p. 668.* Which, if it could be believed, made him the fitter Person to reprove *Jeroboam* afterward for the Sin of the golden Calves, and also for the Rebellion, which he had seen punished in *Korah*, *Dathan*, and *Abiram*.

And



*And he had clad himself with a new garment ;]* That he might make the better Appearance at Court, when he waited on the King.

*And they two were alone in the field.]* The Prophet, I suppose, took *Jeroboam* aside to speak with him privately: For it cannot be thought that *Jeroboam* had no Servants to attend him; but they were bid to stay where they were, 'till the Prophet and he went to confer about some private business.

Ver. 30. *And Abijah caught the new garment that was on him, and rent it in twelve Pieces.]* An Emblem of what followed, or rather a Prediction of it: For there were two Ways in those ancient Days of foretelling things; one in express Words, the other in Signs and Resemblances; according to the manner of the Eastern People in the eldest Times. Many Instances we have of it, after this of *Abijah*. As *Zedekiah* made himself a Pair of Iron Horns, and said to *Ahab*, *with these shalt thou push the Syrians*, &c. xxii. 11. *Elisba* also foretold the Victories of *Joash*, by shooting Arrows and stamping on the Ground so many times, 2 Kings xiii. 18, &c. *Jeremiah* foretold the pulling down of *Jerusalem's* Pride, by the rotting of his Girdle, where it was buried by *Euphrates*; and a great many more in the Old Testament, which continued in the New; *Agabus* foretelling the Bonds of *St Paul*, by binding his own Hands and Feet with *St Paul's* Girdle.

Ver. 31. *And he said to Jeroboam, Take thee ten pieces: for thus saith the LORD, the God of Israel, Behold, I will rend the kingdom out of the hand of Solomon, and will give ten tribes to thee:]* Whence it is called frequently, *the Kingdom of the ten Tribes*.

Ver. 32. *(But he shall have one tribe.)* Besides his own. Or, *Benjamin* and *Judah* may be looked upon but as one Tribe; both of them having a Share in the City of *Jerusalem*, and lying near one to the other.

*For my servant David's sake, and for Jerusalem's sake, the city which I have chosen out of all the tribes of Israel)]* See above, ver. 13.

Ver. 33. *Because they have forsaken me, and have worshipped Ashtoreth the goddess of the Zidonians, and Chemosh the god of the Moabites, and Milcom the god of the children of Ammon,]* It seems by this that some of the People, at least of *Solomon's* Court, followed his bad Example.

*And have not walked in my ways, to do that which is right in mine eyes, and to keep my statutes and my judgments, as did David his father.]* This was a great Aggravation of his Sin, that he had so good a Father; who had given him an excellent Education under *Nathan* the Prophet (as I observed, 2 Sam. xii. 25.) and a most pious Example; having never gone after other Gods, but celebrated the Praises of the LORD with the highest Strains of Love and Devotion.

Ver 34. *Howbeit, I will not take the whole kingdom out of his hand;]* No, not the Kingdom of the ten Tribes; which *Solomon* held as long as he lived. These and the following Words explain the Threatning, ver. 32. of *rending the Kingdom out of the hand of Solomon*, not to be meant of taking any part of it from him, during his Life.

*But will make him a prince all the days of his life, for David my servant's sake; whom I chose,*

*because he kept my commandments, and my statutes:]* This was an Admonition to *Jeroboam* not to molest *Solomon* in his life-time, by raising Rebellion against him; and also to walk in God's Ways as *David* did, and not fall into Idolatry; for which Sin God resolved to punish *Solomon* so severely, as to rend the greatest Part of his Kingdom from his Posterity.

Ver. 35. *But I will take the kingdom out of his son's hand, and will give it unto thee, even ten tribes.]* He bids him not doubt of what he promised; but he must stay for it 'till *Solomon* was dead.

Ver. 36. *And unto his son will I give one tribe,]* He saith *one* Tribe, though there were two; because (as *Abarbinel* observes) they had their Portion and Possession together in *Jerusalem*; and, though two Tribes, were both called (by the Tribe of *Judah*; because of the Eminence and Glory of that Tribe; which was so great, that before the Division of the Kingdom, *Judah* is often mentioned as distinct from the rest of *Israel*. See 1 Sam. xi. 8. 2 Sam. v. 5.

*That David my servant may have a light alway before me in Jerusalem, the city which I have chosen, to put my name there.]* By a *light* is meant a Succession of Kings, who are called the *Light* of the People (as *David* is, 2 Sam. xxi. 17.) because they cheer them by their comfortable Influence, when they govern well. And these are said to be *before God* in *Jerusalem*; because there he dwelt where they reigned.

Ver. 37. *And I will take thee,]* From that Condition wherein he was, and place him on a Throne, as here follows.

*And thou shalt reign according to all that thy soul desireth,]* Have a very flourishing Kingdom.

*And shalt be king over Israel.]* But not reign in *Jerusalem*.

Ver. 38. *And it shall be, if thou wilt hearken unto all that I command thee, and wilt walk in my ways, and do that which is right in my sight, to keep my statutes and my commandments, as David my servant did, that I will be with thee, and build thee a sure house, as I built for David,]* The same Promise that he made to *David*, 2 Sam. vii. 16. only he doth not say he would establish *his* Kingdom for ever.

*And will give Israel unto thee.]* Make them his obedient Subjects.

Ver. 39. *And I will for this]* For their Sin, mentioned ver. 33.

*Afflict the house of David,]* By this rending the greatest Part of the Kingdom from them.

*But not for ever.]* For in the Days of the *Messiah*, saith *Rashi*, the Kingdom shall be restored to the House of *David*. And he might have added, that few returned out of their Captivity (but the House of *Judah*, who were delivered in a wonderful Manner from *Babylon*).

Ver. 40. *Solomon sought therefore to kill Jeroboam:]* A Sign of his Dotage; that he could entertain a Thought of endeavouring to defeat the Purpose of God! But how he came to know what was secretly transacted between *Abijah* and *Jeroboam* alone, is a great Question. Perhaps the Prophet made no Scruple to report what he had delivered in the Name of the LORD. Or, *Jeroboam* himself, being puffed up with this Assurance, could not contain, but told it to some of his Confidants, who spread it abroad. Or, his Servants,



Servants, though they heard not a Word spoken, yet seeing the rending of his Garment into twelve Parts, and the giving ten to him, might speak of it: The Meaning of which *Solomon* easily understood; being told (by the same Prophet, perhaps) that the Kingdom should be rent from him, and given to his Servant, *ver. 11.*

*And Jeroboam arose and fled into Egypt,]* This was a common Refuge for discontented People. And it may seem strange that the King of *Egypt*, being nearly allied to *Solomon*, either his Father-in-Law, or Brother-in-Law (for many think the Father of *Solomon's* Wife was dead) should give such Persons Entertainment. But it is to be considered that *Kingdoms are never married*; and Princes commonly regard only their own Interest.

*Unto Shishak king of Egypt,]* All the Kings of *Egypt* had the Title of *Pharaoh*, even from the Time of *Abraham*: But we never find any of them, 'till now, called by his proper Name, to distinguish from other *Pharaohs*; unless *Remes* (*Gen. xlvii. 11.*) be the Name of a King, not of a Country. Now all agree that this is the great King who is called by the *Greeks Sesostris*: Who having subdued *Ethiopia*, extended his Conquests into *Asia*, as far as the *Affyrians* and *Medes*, as *Josephus* tells us, who calls himself *Sethosis*, *Lib. i. contra Apion.*

*And was in Egypt until the death of Solomon.]* Being protected by *Shishak*: Who, it is likely, was now projecting the great Conquests he made afterwards.

*Ver. 41. And the rest of the acts of Solomon, and all that he did, and his wisdom, are they not written in the book of the Acts of Solomon?* All the Kings of *Israel*, as *Abarbinel* thinks, maintained some wise Men, who wrote all that passed in their Reign. Perhaps this was begun by *Solomon* (for we read not of any Book of the Acts of *David*) and out of these *Annals*, the sacred Writer of this Book took what he thought most useful, and omitted the rest, which he did not judge so necessary and instructive.

*Ver. 42. And the time that Solomon reigned in Jerusalem, over all Israel,]* There seems to have been no need to say he reigned in *Jerusalem*, since he reigned over all *Israel*; if it had not been to shew the great Tranquillity of his Reign. Which was such, that he did not go out to War as other Kings, but lived quietly in his royal City.

*Was forty years.]* He lost the great Privilege of long Life, which God promised if he performed such sincere Obedience as *David* did; unto whose Age he did not attain.

*Ver. 43. And Solomon slept with his fathers, and was buried in the city of David his father: and Rehoboam his son reigned in his stead.]* Thus concludes the History of this great Man; without any, the least, mention of his Repentance; though he saw terrible Punishments coming upon his Family. Which should have moved him (one would think) to pull down the high Places he had built for idolatrous Worship, and abandon all his strange Wives; and done some remarkable Honour to the LORD God of *Israel*. Which if he did, the Divine Writer did not think fit to record it, but to leave all in Uncertainty, and leave a Blot upon his Memory;

that all Posterity might have a frightful Example of humane Weakness, and learn thereby to watch and pray, lest they enter into Temptation.

## C H A P. XII.

*Verse 1. AND Rehoboam went to Shechem:]* A Multitude of Children was accounted a great Blessing among the *Israelites*: But if *Solomon* had any more besides this Son, and two Daughters, mentioned *iv. 11, 15.* this holy Writer would not do him the Honour to mention them, but passes them by in Silence: Nor doth he vouchsafe to acquaint us (as is usual) in the Beginning of his Story, from whom *Rehoboam* was descended by the Mother's Side; but in the Conclusion mentions it twice (*xiv. 21, 31.*) that she was an *Ammonitess*, one of an infamous Nation. Howsoever, though he was not intirely an *Israelite*, he pretended to the Kingdom; being the eldest, if not the only Son of *Solomon*, to whom it belonged by the Law then established; which ever after continued in *Judah*. That which follows shews this was the Opinion of all the People.

*For all Israel were come to Shechem to make him king.]* To acknowledge him for their Sovereign, as rightful Successor to *Solomon*. They met for this Purpose at *Shechem*, because it was the most convenient Place, being in the middle of the Kingdom. Or, as others think, because it was in the Tribe of *Ephraim*; where they could speak their Minds more freely than they durst at *Jerusalem*, which was in the Tribe of *Judah*. And this hath some Colour in it, from what follows; that they sent for *Jeroboam* to meet them there, who would not venture to come to *Jerusalem*.

*Ver. 2. And it came to pass when Jeroboam the Son of Nebat, who was yet in Egypt, heard of it,]* The Words of it are not in the Original, but only that he heard: Either of this Meeting, or of the Death of *Solomon*; or both: For he could not hear of this Meeting, without hearing of his Death.

*(For he was fled from the presence of king Solomon, and Jeroboam dwelt in Egypt)]* As hath been related in the foregoing Chapter.

*Ver. 3. That they sent and called him:]* At the same Time that he heard of this Meeting, and the Occasion of it, a Message came to him from the Assembly, to desire his Assistance.

*And Jeroboam, and all the congregation of Israel came, and spake unto Rehoboam, saying,]* By all the Congregation is meant all their Elders, and Heads of their Tribes; who chose *Jeroboam* to be their Speaker.

*Ver. 4. Thy father made our yoke grievous: Now therefore make thou the grievous service of thy father, and his heavy yoke which he put upon us, lighter; and we will serve thee.]* They begin with a Complaint against the former Government; but promise to submit to *Rehoboam* as their King, and be his faithful Subjects, if he would promise to ease them of those Burdens which his Father had imposed on them. Which were not so heavy as they represented them, considering the Peace and Plenty they enjoyed (*iv. 25.*) and the vast Riches he brought into the Kingdom,



Kingdom; so that Silver was nothing accounted of in his Days, x. 21. But People are more sensible of the smallest Pressures, than of all their Enjoyments: And most sensible of the least Burden, when they are at perfect Ease. Such were the Tributes he exacted for his Buildings, the Expences of his Family, and Maintenance of Chariots and Horsemen, which were all for the Honour of the Nation, and employed great Numbers of them. *Abarbinel* thinks it is possible, when War was raised by *Hadad* and by *Rezon* against him, in his latter Days, the Tribute might be increased, and occasion their Grumbling. But howsoever that be, it is observable that they make no Complaints at all of *Solomon's* Idolatry, and the strange Worship he introduced; about which they were not concerned, but rather complied with him. See xi. 33.

Ver. 5. *And he said unto them, Depart yet for three days, then come again to me: and the people departed.*] He desired Time to consider, in so weighty a Business; pretending, I suppose, he would examine the Truth of their Allegations: otherwise it had been dangerous to send them away without any Answer, when it was evident they were disgusted.

Ver. 6. *And king Rehoboam*] By this it is plain, he had a Title to the Kingdom; though they had not yet made a Recognition, as we speak, of his Authority.

*Consulted with the old men that stood before Solomon his father, while he yet lived,*] *Solomon* was so wise, as in his best Days not to depend solely on his own Wisdom; but had other wise Men with whom he advised, as his Counsellors in all Matters of Moment.

*And said, How do ye advise, that I may answer this people?*] Being Men of great Experience, who had learned, no doubt, much Wisdom under so wise a King as *Solomon*, he had Reason both to consult such Sages, and to depend upon their Advice, as likely to be most prudent and safe.

Ver. 7. *And they spake unto him, saying, If thou wilt be a servant unto this people to day, and wilt serve them and answer them, and speak good words to them, then they will be thy servants for ever.*] This was most solid Advice, to get Possession of the Kingdom, and then he might govern as his Father had done. And he might easily be possessed of it, by condescending to them for once, and giving them such an Answer as they desired; which would oblige them to him for ever. For to be *their servant one day*, signified no more than to court them with good Words, and kind Promises, to be an easy Governour of them: Which would win their Hearts, and make them submit chearfully to him; and give him the same Power which his Father had.

Ver. 8. *But he forsook the counsel of the old men, which they gave him,*] He was proud and vain, I suppose, and scorned to court his People; expecting Obedience unto him, as an absolute Monarch.

*And consulted with young men, that were grown up with him, and stood before him.*] He had made some of his Familiars, who had been bred up with him, and attended him, to be now of his Privy-Council: Men unexperienced, and who

understood not the Humour of the People; which is a frequent Fault of new Kings, who, to shew their Power, presently change their Counsellors, and put in new Officers; to gratify all their Dependants; not considering who are wisest, but who have been their Companions.

Ver. 9. *And he said unto them, What counsel give ye, that we may answer this people, who have spoken to me, saying; make the yoke which thy father did put upon us, lighter?*] It is likely he told them what the old Counsellors had said; who they thought, were too timorous, and therefore give more bold and fierce Advice.

Ver. 10. *And the young men that were grown up with him, spake unto him, saying;*] They were not so young, but they might have had more Wit (if they had not been Men of Pleasure) for *Rehoboam* being one and forty Years old when he began to reign (xiv. 21.) and these Men growing up with him, were about the same Age.

*Thus shalt thou speak unto the people, that spake unto thee, saying, thy father made our yoke heavy, but make thou it lighter to us: thus shalt thou say unto them, My little finger shall be thicker than my father's loins.*] They advise him to threaten to lay Burdens upon them, as much heavier than his Father's, as the Loins are thicker than the little Finger: Words of Infamy, Madness, Stupidity, and full of Lies, as *Abarbinel* here glosses: For he magnifies himself, as if his Power excelled his Father's, unto whom he was nothing comparable. And if it had been true, it did not become him to boast on this Fashion; but he ought rather to have highly magnified the Glory and Majesty of his Father.

Ver. 11. *And now whereas my father did lade you with a heavy yoke, I will add to your yoke:*] What a senseless Stupidity was this (as the same Author proceeds) to grant the Accusation to be true, which they brought against his Father; and not rather to have excused, and defended so excellent a Prince, from whom they could not but acknowledge they had received exceeding great Benefits?

*My father hath chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scorpions.*] This is still worse, to accuse his Father of such Severity (which the People did not) that he treated the *Israelites* like Beasts: For a whip is for a horse, as *Solomon* observes, *Prov. xxvi. 3.* And who could endure to hear him say, that he would treat them far more severely, and tear their very Flesh in Pieces? For that is meant by *Scorpions*, Whips with Rowels in them (as we speak) which *Abarbinel* calls iron Thorns. See *Bochartus* in his *Hierozycon*, P. 2. Lib. iv. Cap. xxxii. *Ralbag* simply calls them Thorns tied to a Whip, which grievously pricked and tore the Flesh. See *Carpzovius* upon *Schickard's Jus Regium*, Cap. ii. Theorem vii. p. 143. What People could bear this with Patience; or endure to come under the Yoke of such a furious Prince?

Ver. 12. *So Jeroboam and all the people came to Rehoboam the third day, as the king had appointed, saying, come again the third day.*] In which Time wiser Thoughts, one would have expected, should have taken Place: But *Solomon* had observed, that *there is no counsel, nor understand-*



ing, nor wisdom against the L O R D (Prov. xxi. 30.) whose doing this was, as it follows, ver. 15.

Ver. 13. *And the king answered the people roughly, and forsook the counsel of the old men which they gave him ;*] He answered them like a Tyrant, not like a King.

Ver. 14. *And spake to them after the counsel of the young men.*] Which was most suitable to a Prince of a high and violent Spirit.

*Saying, My father made your yoke heavy, and I will add to your yoke ; my father also chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scorpions.*] He thought, it is likely, to have frightened them into Obedience, by this blustering Language ; which justly made him odious.

Ver. 15. *Wherefore the king hearkned not unto the people of Israel ;*] Who desired to be eased of their Burdens.

*For the cause was from the L O R D, that he might perform his saying, which the L O R D spake by Ahijah the Shilonite unto Jeroboam the son of Nebat.*] God infatuated his Counsels, to bring about his own Design. Otherwise, he could not have been so blinded, as not to see how basely he reflected upon his Father ; and how unlikely it was that the People would submit to such a Power as he intended to exercise over them. But as *Livy* excellently speaks, *fatis urgentibus rempublicam, omnia salutaria monita spernuntur.* And here one cannot but observe the vast Difference there is between the Sacred and Profane Historians. The Intention of the former is to possess Mens Minds with a Sense of Divine Providence, which secretly rules in all publick, as well as private Affairs. *Machiavel* himself, though far from being religious, was sensible of an over-ruling Power interposing in all Things, which few Historians acknowledge so as they ought : But rather write, as if they would not have their Reader think of any thing but the Wisdom, Strength and Policy of those that manage Affairs ; without any Consideration of the Care God takes of them. Of this *Hermannus Conringius* thinks *Polybius* himself to have been guilty ; whatsoever *Excuses Casaubon* makes for him. *De Civili Prudentia*, Cap. xiv.

Ver. 16. *So when all Israel saw that the king hearkened not unto them, the people answered the king saying, What portion have we in David ?*] They renounce all Interest in him, and in his Family.

*Neither have we inheritance in the son of Jesse :*] So they call *David* in a contemptuous and scornful manner. Wherein they have left us an exact Picture of an ungrateful World, as *Victorinus Strigelius* here speaks. For no Eloquence is able to express the great Merits of *David* to the Children of *Israel*.

*To your tents, O Israel : now see to thine own house David.* So *Israel* departed to their tents.] They left *Rehoboam*, and bad him look to his own Affairs ; for they would have nothing to do with him. Thus other Kingdoms have been overturned by the Folly of heady young Men : As an old Poet observes in *Tully's* Book *de Senectute*, Cap. vi. where he quotes these Verses out of *Nævius* in a Play of his, in which one asks,

*Cedò, qui vestram Rempublicam tantam amisistis tam citò.*

Tell me, I beseech thee, how you came to lose such a famous Common-wealth so quickly ?

Unto which he brings in another returning this Answer,

*Proventabant Oratores novi, Stulti Adolescentuli.*

There rose up new Orators, a Company of foolish Youths.

Upon which *Cato* makes this Remark ; viz.

*Temeritas, est florentis ætatis, Prudentia senescentis.*

Rashness is the Property of Youth, Prudence belongs to Old Age.

Ver. 17. *But as for the children of Israel which dwelt in the cities of Judah, Rehoboam reigned over them.*] As several of the *Simconites* also did ; who were very nearly situated to *Judah*.

Ver. 18. *Then king Rehoboam sent Adoniram, who was over the tribute ;*] This was a new piece of Imprudence, to send one to treat with them, when they were so highly exasperated ; and to send him (with Promises, perhaps, of easing them, when it was too late) who had the principal Care of those Tributes, of which they complained. For People hate those that are the Instruments of their Oppression, or any way employed in it.

*And all Israel stoned him with stones, that he died :*] There was a general Uproar against him ; in which they committed this Barbarity, against the Law of all Nations ; which prohibits any Violence to be done to a King's Ambassador. But in their Rage, the King feared (it appears by the next Words) they would have no Respect to himself.

*Therefore king Rehoboam made speed to get him up to his chariot, to flee to Jerusalem.*] This seems to be a further Imprudence ; for he should have maintained his Ground and kept Footing (as we speak) in the Country of *Israel* ; from whence it might not have been easy for them to expel him : But Fear is as bad an Adviser as Fury. This is the first Time that we read of a King riding in a Chariot ; for we never read that either *Saul*, or *David*, or *Solomon* rode in them : But after the Division of the Kingdom, there is frequent mention of the Use of them both by the Kings of *Judah* and *Israel*.

Ver. 19. *So Israel rebelled against the house of David unto this day.*] Would no longer be governed by any of *David's* Race ; who had been their Deliverer from their powerful Enemies. The Remembrance of which might have made them more patient ; and not so forward to revolt from a Family to which they had been so much obliged. But old Kindnesses are laid asleep, and People are strangely forgetful of Benefits, as *Pindar* speaks, in *Isthmia*, Ode 7.

Ἀλλὰ παλαιὰ γὰρ εὔδει  
Χάρις, ἀμνάμονες δὲ βροτοί.

This Defection from the Family of *David* is justly called a Rebellion, as *Salianus* notes in his *Annals* ; for though God willed this Defection, as a Punishment of Sin ; yet they did Wickedly who



who were the Authors of it. And though the Family of Solomon deserved such a Punishment, yet the People had no just Reason to forsake their legal Prince. For they had no Order from God for it: And Rehoboam's Answer to them did not deserve such a Resentment; much less so sudden and inconsiderate. Nor did the Prophetical Prediction warrant it: Which might have been fulfilled some other Way, than by such a violent throwing off his Government.

Ver. 20. *And it came to pass when all Israel heard that Jeroboam was come again,]* The great Men had seen him, and needed not to be informed of his Return, ver. 3. but now the News was spread over all the Country.

*That they sent, and called him to the congregation,]* From his Tent, unto which he was gone, as other People were, ver. 16.

*And made him king over all Israel:]* Without any Condition, that we can find; though it is likely, he promised to ease them of all their Burdens.

*There was none that followed the house of David, but the tribe of Judah only.]* Which comprehended Benjamin also, being one with it, as was observed before, xi. 31, 32. And it was by the singular Providence of God, that they were not also tempted to desert such a haughty Prince as Rehoboam was.

Ver. 21. *And when Rehoboam was come to Jerusalem, he assembled all the house of Judah, with the tribe of Benjamin, an hundred and fourscore thousand chosen men, which were warriors; to fight against the house of Israel, to bring the kingdom again to Rehoboam the son of Solomon.]* This was a very potent Tribe, especially assisted by Benjamin, and wanted not Affection to the House of David, which they had expressed upon all Occasions: And were ready now, with a very numerous Army, to fall upon the Israelites, before their new King was settled in his Throne; and bring them back to their rightful King.

Ver. 22. *But the word of God came to Shemaiah the man of God, saying,]* A Person, known to be a Prophet, was sent to them from God, with a Message, before they marched to the Country of Israel.

Ver. 23. *Speak unto Rehoboam the son of Solomon king of Judah,]* God himself owns him for no more than king of Judah.

*And to all the house of Judah and Benjamin, and to the remnant of the people, saying,]* Unto those mentioned ver. 17.

Ver. 24. *Thus saith the LORD, Ye shall not go up to fight against your brethren the children of Israel; turn every man to his house: for this thing is from me.]* Who was resolved to maintain what he had done. It was the Intention and Design of God to make Jeroboam King: But he did not stay for his Appointment, but usurped the Kingdom by the Help of certain vain Fellows, who raised a Sedition against Rehoboam. See 2 Chron. xiii. 5, 6, 7. And besides, God did not promise to set his Posterity upon his Throne (as he did to David and Solomon) unless he kept his Commandments, which he did not; and therefore though he saith *the thing was from him*, yet the setting his Son upon the Throne after him, and the succeeding Kings, were not *from him*;

but in Hosea he saith, viii. 4. *They have set up kings, but not by me: They have set up princes, and I know it not, i. e. did not approve it.*

*They hearkened therefore to the word of the LORD, and returned to depart, according to the word of the LORD.]* Now Rehoboam was cool, and began to be wise, in not resisting the Council of God, who had taken the Kingdom from him; but submitting to his Decree, and bearing it patiently. The People, at least, were of this Mind, and persuaded him not to engage in a War, wherein God would appear against him. According to the Council of Menander mentioned by Strigelius, Μη δεσμάχεις, μηδὲ προσάγεις τῷ πράγματι χερμένους ἐτέρας, τὰς δὲ ἀναγκαίους φέρει. *Fight not against God; neither do any thing to bring upon thy self new storms and tempests: but bear those that are necessary, and cannot be avoided.*

Ver. 25. *Then Jeroboam built Shechem in mount Ephraim, and dwelt therein,]* For there it is likely they chose him King; and therefore he enlarged and beautified it (which is meant by *built*) to be his Royal Seat.

*And he went out from thence, and built Peniel.]* But this did not satisfy him, he removed from thence to another City, which he also built; and so became a Builder as well as Solomon, with whose Buildings he is thought to have found fault.

Ver. 26. *And Jeroboam said in his heart, Now shall the kingdom return to the house of David:]* Though God had told him he would build him a sure House (xi. 37, 38.) if he kept his Commandments, yet he did not trust to his Promise; but after he had been some Time possessed of the Kingdom, began to fear a Revolt of the People, if he permitted them to worship God according to the Law; and so contrived to make an Alteration in Religion.

Ver. 27. *If the people go up to do sacrifice in the house of the LORD at Jerusalem, then shall the heart of this people turn again unto their lord, even unto Rehoboam king of Judah, and they shall kill me, and go again to Rehoboam king of Judah.]* All the People of Israel being bound at the three great Feasts to go up to Jerusalem to worship; as also, upon other solemn Occasions, devout Persons going thither to offer Gifts and Sacrifices; he was afraid, they would be so taken with the Splendor and Magnificence of the Temple, and of the Royal City, and recal to Memory the famous Acts of David and Solomon, who were buried there; and the King would find such Means to oblige them, and the Priests and Levites so sollicit them to unite themselves again to Judah (who appeared to have the better Cause, having the Temple in Possession, where God dwelt) that they would be drawn not only to forsake him, but to kill him. For besides all this, their Belief of one only God was the principal Cause of Union among them: And next to that was their worshipping God at one only Place. Therefore instead of consulting God, and committing himself to him, who could and would have preserved him in the Kingdom he had given him, notwithstanding all these Dangers; he took Counsel, as it here follows, of such as were governed only by *Reasons of State*, and devised how to establish himself by wicked Inventions.

The Talmudists, after their manner, add another



ther Reason why he took the following Resolution. For, saith *R. Nachman* (in the *Gemara* of the *Sanhedrin*, Cap. xi. N. 46.) the Custom being that none should sit in the Court of the Temple, but only the King of the House of *David*, he thought with himself, that if the People saw *Rehoboam* sit, and him stand, they would conclude the former to be King, and *Jeroboam* but his Servant. Another Reason is alledged by *Kimchi*: When the Year of Release came, *Jeroboam* said within himself, it is written, *Deut. xxxi. 10, 11. At the end of every seventh year, thou shalt read this law in the ears of all Israel, &c.* Now if I attempt to read it, the People will say, the King who is in the place which God hath chosen (i. e. *Jerusalem*) must read first, and so I must read it after him, which will be a Disgrace to me: And if I read it not at all it will be worse, for I shall be thought profane. But these, and such like, are frivolous Reasons, for his Resolution to draw the People from the Worship of God according to the Law, at his own House at *Jerusalem*.

Ver. 28. *Whereupon the king took counsel,*] Of some secular Politicians; who if they could but preserve the Civil Government, cared not what became of Religion. The *Jews* in the Place above-mentioned, in the *Sanhedrin*, tell the Story in this manner; That he summoned a Council, consisting partly of pious, partly of wicked Men; whom he asked whether they would subscribe to all that he ordered. They answered, Yes. Then he said, he would be constituted their King: To which they consenting, he asked if they would obey him. To which there being a ready Compliance, he added Even though I command you to serve Idols? At which the pious Men startled, and were full of Indignation; but their wicked Neighbours whispered to them saying, Do you think *Jeroboam* will honour Idols? He saith this only to try your Obedience. And so even *Abijah* himself was drawn in, by this Fraud, to subscribe to what he proposed, that they would be obedient in all things without Exception.

*And made two calves of gold,*] One Egg, as *Bochartus* speaks, is not more like to another, than these Calves were to that which *Aaron* made. Only, as the *Jews* say in *Sanhedrin*, 'till *Jeroboam's* Time the *Israelites* sucked but one Calf; but from that Time they sucked two. They were of the same Matter with *Aaron's*, and made for the same Reason: His, because *Moses* was absent; and these, because the Holy City (where the Temple, the Altar, the Priests of God were) they could not come to with Safety. And as *Aaron*, so *Jerusalem* learnt this Calf Worship in *Egypt*, where he lived for some Years. The *LXX* translate these Words, δύο δαμάλεις χρυσῆς, two *She-Calves*; and so doth *Josephus*: And the Prophet *Hosea* also speaks of them in the Feminine Gender, x. 5. by way of Contempt and Despise, as *Bochartus* thinks. It is not improbable (as some Learned Men have conjectured) that he made two Calves, in Imitation of the *Egyptians*, with whom he had conversed, who had a couple of Oxen which they worshipped; *Apis* at *Memphis* the Metropolis of the upper *Egypt*; and *Mnevis* at *Hierapolis*, which was the chief City of the lower.

*And said unto them, It is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem:*] Or, as some expound the Hebrew Words, you have gone long enough to *Jerusalem*.

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*(So he did in Bethel) sacrificing unto the calves that he had made:]* What he had done in *Dan*, he did also in *Bethel*; for hitherto hath been related only what he did in the remotest Place.

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*In the month which he had devised of his own heart:]* Out of his own Will and Pleasure (as the *Targum* translates it) against the express Ordinance of God.

*And ordained a feast unto the children of Israel,]* To be observed, I suppose, every Year in *Bethel*, as the Feast of Tabernacles was at *Jerusalem*. And it is likely it lasted as many Days; unless he affected to make Alterations in every thing, and ordained more, or fewer Days, as he thought good.

*And he offered upon the altar, and burnt incense.]* He presumed to perform the highest Part of the Priests Office, which was to burn Incense. Which he had not done in *Dan*, as *Abarbinel* thinks, but only in *Bethel*; which was in some regard to the Metropolis of his Kingdom, and Head of the Tribe of *Ephraim*; to which Place the Prophet, mentioned in the next Chapter, came, and not to *Dan*. He observes also that the Scripture saith thrice he offered upon the Altar, speaking of different Times and Places. *First* it is said, ver. 30, that he offered upon the Altar; that is at *Dan*, where all *Israel* went to worship. *Secondly*, he offered again in *Bethel*, in the Beginning of this Verse: And then it is said here in the Conclusion, that he ascended the Altar in *Bethel*, not to offer Sacrifice, but to burn Incense, which he had not done in *Dan*. And when he burnt Incense on the Feast-Day he had instituted, the Man of God came from *Judah*, and prophesied against the Altar, as it follows in the next Chapter.

### C H A P. XIII.

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*Tertullian* in his Book *De Jejunio*, Cap. xvi. call him *Sameas*: Where *Rigaltius* observes that *Josephus* calls him *Jadon*, and *Epiphanius* *Joam*.

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*And Jeroboam stood by the altar to burn incense.]* Upon that Feast-Day, which he had instituted. See the last Verse of the foregoing Chapter.

Ver. 2. *And he cried against the altar in the word of the LORD,]* Declared it, and the Worship there performed, to be idolatrous; which he spake by Authority from God.

*And said, O altar, altar,]* Some think he mentioned the Altar twice, to signify that he prophesied against that in *Dan*, as well as against this in *Bethel*.

*Thus saith the LORD, behold, a child shall be born unto the house of David, Jeshiah by name,]* The Prophets saw things future, as if they were present. And thought this was not to come to pass, 'till above three hundred and sixty Years after this Time, yet this Man of God foretels it, as if it were to be done e'er long. And the Prediction is the more wonderful, because he tells out of what Family he should spring, and what should be his Name.

*And upon thee shall he offer the priests of the high places that burn incense upon thee, and mens bones*



ther Reason why he took the following Resolution. For, saith *R. Nachman* (in the *Gemara* of the *Sanhedrin*, Cap. xi. N. 46.) the Custom being that none should sit in the Court of the Temple, but only the King of the House of *David*, he thought with himself, that if the People saw *Rehoboam* sit, and him stand, they would conclude the former to be King, and *Jeroboam* but his Servant. Another Reason is alledged by *Kimchi*: When the Year of Release came, *Jeroboam* said within himself, it is written, *Deut. xxxi. 10, 11. At the end of every seventh year, thou shalt read this law in the ears of all Israel, &c.* Now if I attempt to read it, the People will say, the King who is in the place which God hath chosen (i. e. *Jerusalem*) must read first, and so I must read it after him, which will be a Disgrace to me: And if I read it not at all it will be worse, for I shall be thought profane. But these, and such like, are frivolous Reasons, for his Resolution to draw the People from the Worship of God according to the Law, at his own House at *Jerusalem*.

Ver. 28. *Whereupon the king took counsel,*] Of some secular Politicians; who if they could but preserve the Civil Government, cared not what became of Religion. The *Jews* in the Place above-mentioned, in the *Sanhedrin*, tell the Story in this manner; That he summoned a Council, consisting partly of pious, partly of wicked Men; whom he asked whether they would subscribe to all that he ordered. They answered, Yes. Then he said, he would be constituted their King: To which they consenting, he asked if they would obey him. To which there being a ready Compliance, he added Even though I command you to serve Idols? At which the pious Men startled, and were full of Indignation; but their wicked Neighbours whispered to them saying, Do you think *Jeroboam* will honour Idols? He saith this only to try your Obedience. And so even *Abijah* himself was drawn in, by this Fraud, to subscribe to what he proposed, that they would be obedient in all things without Exception.

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*And upon thee shall he offer the priests of the high places that burn incense upon thee, and mens bones*



*Bones shall be burn upon thee.]* The Meaning is not that he should burn the Priests alive; but the Execution of this Prophecy explains it: That he should slay the Priests of the high Places; and then burn their Bones, as he did the Bones of those that had been buried; and thereby defile this Altar; 2 Kings xxiii. 15, 16; 20.

Ver. 3. *And he gave a sign the same day,]* To confirm this Prophecy:

*Saying, This is the sign which the LORD hath spoken;]* A Proof that he spake from God; and not from himself.

*Behold, the altar shall be rent, and the ashes that are upon it shall be poured out.]* This could not be done; but by the Power of God; who hereby demonstrated he had sent this Prophet to speak these Words; which were presently fulfilled.

Ver. 4. *And it came to pass, when Jeroboam heard the saying of the man of God, which had cried against the altar in Bethel,]* In the Presence of the King himself, when he was about the solemn Service of his gods.

*That he put forth his hand from the altar,]* Where he stood, ver. 1.

*Saying, Lay hold on him.]* As he himself would have done, had he been near him.

*And his hand which he put forth against him dried up, so that he could not pull it in again to him.]* The Muscles and Sinews shrunk, so that it was stiff and frigid; and he perfectly lost the Use of it. Which Prodigy was a new Token, that the Prophet's Words would be fulfilled.

Ver. 5. *And the altar also was rent, and the ashes poured out from the altar, according to the sign which the man of God had given by the word of the LORD.]* Which so amazed all the People, that we do not find any body went about to lay hold on him; but Jeroboam himself was, for the present, astonished at the miraculous Power of God.

Ver. 6. *And the king answered and said unto the man of God, Intreat now the face of the LORD thy God and pray for me,]* A marvellous Change! He that just now threatned, humbly supplicates him that smote him.

*That my hand may be restored me again.]* He was convinced that Healing must come from the same Hand that gave the Wound; and that it was in vain to seek to his gods.

*And the man of God besought the LORD, and the king's hand was restored him again, and became as it was before.]* He did not intend his Destruction, but his Reformation; and therefore granted his Request. Whereby a new Miracle was wrought for his Conversion.

Ver. 7. *And the king said unto the man of God, Come home with me, and refresh thy self, and I will give thee a reward.]* A strange Insensibility of God's great Mercy to him; which did not lead him to Repentance, when it moved him to so much Gratitude as to desire to reward him that was the Instrument of his Cure. His Hand was restored, but not a good Mind.

Ver. 8. *And the man of God said to the king, If thou wilt give me half thine house, I will not go in with thee, neither will I eat bread, nor drink water in this place:]* For he had a Charge from God (as it follows) not to communicate with them, who were Apostates from their Religion.

Ver. 9. *For so it was charged me by the LORD, saying,]* The same Divine Authority; which sent him thither to do what they had heard and seen, gave him this following Charge.

*Eat not bread, nor drink water, nor turn again by the same way that thou camest.]* The Reason is plain; why he should not eat or drink with them; because that was to have familiar Society with Idolaters. But why he should not return the same Way that he came, is not so evident. Some think it was to represent, that even the Way to Bethel was abominable; and therefore not to be frequented: Or, to shew how much we ought to abhor that which leads to Evil. But it seems to be a Proverbial Speech; signifying that he should be constant and stedfast in executing the Charge committed to him. For he that doth any thing without Success is said to return by the Way that he went, *Isaiah xxxvii. 29, 34.* And therefore not return by the Way that he went, is to do his Business effectually.

Ver. 10. *And so he went another way, and returned not by the way that he came to Bethel,]* To shew (as many think) how God detests the Way to Idolatry; and would have it to be forgotten.

Ver. 11. *And there was an old prophet]* One who had many Years been a Prophet before this Apostacy; whose Name the Jews say was *Micah*: Who was a Worshipper of the true God, though he dwelt among this idolatrous People. A great many take him to have been a false Prophet: But *Theodoret* proves that he was a true, though guilty of telling a Lye to the Man of God. See *Hermannus Witsius* his *Miscellanea*, Tom. I. p. 142, &c.

*In Bethel,]* He was originally of *Samaria*, as we learn from 2 Kings xxiii. 18. But removed hither, it is likely, since this Revolution, that he might see what *Jeroboam* designed.

*And his sons came and told him all the works that the man of God had done that day in Bethel:]* In the Hebrew it is, *his son came and told him, &c.* that is, one of his Sons came first, and told all the foregoing Passages; and afterward came all the rest of them, and confirmed what he had related.

*The words that he had spoken to the king, then they also told their father.]* By this it appears, they were present when *Jeroboam* stood at the Altar; and therefore joined in that idolatrous Worship; though their Father did not, and yet was so timorous that he durst not reprove it.

Ver. 12. *And their father said unto them, Which way went he? for his sons had seen what way the man of God went that came from Judah.]* They had the Curiosity to observe what Way such a remarkable Person went to his own Country; imagining perhaps their Father would have a Mind to discourse with him.

Ver. 13. *And he said unto his sons, Saddle me the ass. So they saddled him the ass, and he rode thereon,]* In the way they directed him.

Ver. 14. *And went after the man of God, and found him sitting under an oak;]* Weary, I suppose, with a long Journey; and faint for want of Victuals.

*And he said, Art thou the man of God that came from Judah? and he said, I am.*



Ver. 15. *Then he said unto him, Come home with me, and eat bread.*] He had a mind to have a further Trial of the Truth of what the Man of God had said; and so, in a crafty deceitful Manner, inticed him back; contrary to his Commission.

Ver. 16. *And he said, I may not return with thee, nor go in with thee; neither will I eat bread, nor drink water with thee in this place.*] It seems he was forbid so much as to go into any of their Houses; lest he should be tempted to eat with them.

Ver. 17. *For it was said to me by the word of the L O R D, thou shalt eat no bread, nor drink water there, nor turn again to go by the way that thou camest.*] For which Reason he refused to accept of the King's Invitation.

Ver. 18. *And he said unto him, I am a prophet as thou art,*] He pretended, as *Abarbinel* thinks, that God had revealed the very same to him concerning the Altar in *Bethel*, that he had threatned.

*And an angel spake unto me, by the word of the L O R D, saying, Bring him back*] And he further pretended that he found him here by the Direction of an Angel. For he did not tell him, that he learnt from his Sons what had passed; but pretended he had it by Prophecy; and that an Angel, in the Name of God, commanded him to bring him back to his House, and refresh him there.

*To thine house, that he may eat bread, and drink water.*] He perswaded him, I suppose, that the Meaning of God's Charge, *thou shalt not eat bread, nor drink water in this place*, was to be understood of Sinners and Idolaters, with whom he might not communicate: But he being a Prophet, was not to be comprehended in that Command. And therefore the Angel said, bring him back to thine house: Not to the Habitation of any Idolater, but to his Dwelling-house, which was undefiled. This *Abarbinel*.

*But he lied unto him.*] All this was a Fiction, which God suffered for the Trial of the good Man; whether he would believe him, or a Man he did not know.

Ver. 19. *So he went back with him, and did eat bread and drink water in his house.*] He thought it possible that God might, in Pity to him, revoke his Prohibition; because he was hungry and weary. But he ought to have believed the Revelation he had himself, of which he was certain; and not trusted to what another pretended was revealed to him; which he could not be sure was true. And it is said emphatically, ver. 22. *The L O R D did say to thee, eat no bread, &c.* If God had, in Compassion to him, thought fit to re-call that Word, he would have done it to himself; and as plainly allowed him to refresh himself, as before he had forbidden it. So *Abarbinel* well observes, *Nothing that a Prophet receives from God is to be altered, unless that Prophet hath another Word from God revoking the former.* As *Abraham* had; to whom God saith, *Gen. xxii. 2. Take thy son, &c. and offer him for a burnt-offering, &c.* But when he was going to do it, he heard that Command repealed, ver. 12. *Lay not thy hand upon the lad, &c.* He would not receive a contrary Command from the Mouth of any Prophet, but

from the Mouth of God alone; from whom he received the first Command.

Ver. 20. *And it came to pass, that as they sat at the table, the word of the L O R D came to the prophet that brought him back:*] God would not vouchsafe to speak to him, who had disobeyed his Voice; but rather to the other, though in his Name he had feigned an Untruth.

Ver. 21. *And he cried unto the man of God that came from Judah, saying,*] He seems to be in a great Agony; from the Consideration of what he had done, and of what the Prophet from *Judah* was to suffer.

*Thus saith the L O R D, Forasmuch as thou hast disobeyed the mouth of the L O R D, and hast not kept the commandment which the L O R D thy God commanded thee,*] To disobey God's Mouth, was to disobey the Word spoken by his Mouth.

Ver. 22. *But camest back, and hast eaten bread and drunk water in this place, of which the L O R D did say to thee, eat no bread, and drink no water; thy carcase shall not come into the sepulchre of thy fathers.*] This was all his Punishment; that he should shortly die, and not be buried among the *Jews*.

Ver. 23. *And it came to pass after he had eaten bread, and after he had drunk, that he saddled for him the ass, for the prophet whom he had brought back.*] It is remarkable that no Punishment is here threatned to the old Prophet, for telling him a Lie. Because, as *Abarbinel* thinks he meant no Harm to the other Prophet; but fancied that his saying, he might not eat or drink with them, was only to excuse himself from going with *Jeroboam* to his House. And besides, it might have turned to the great Advantage of the Prophet who came from *Judah*, if he had stedfastly persisted in his Resolution, and not given Credit to what the old Prophet said against it.

Ver. 24. *And when he was gone, a lion met him by the way, and slew him:*] Not far from *Bethel* there was a Wood; out of which the two She-Bears came, that tare two and forty Children in pieces, 2 *Kings* ii. 24. Out of which Wood, it is probable, this Lion came, and slew this Prophet.

*And his carcase was cast in the way, and the ass stood by it, the lion also stood by the carcase,*] This was to admonish all the Prophets to observe God's Commands strictly; and to shew *Jeroboam* what he might expect; since God spared not a lesser Offender. But as God shewed his Severity, in taking away this Prophet's Life which was his Punishment; so he remarkably shewed his Approbation of the Prophet; in that the Lion stood quietly by his Carcase, and did not devour it; nor do any hurt to the Ass on which he rode. As if he was meerly sent by a Divine Appointment, to execute what God had threatned; but could not move one Step beyond that Commission. For when the Prophet had suffered what God intended, he takes even his dead Body into his Protection; and would not let it be violated, as his observed below, ver. 28.

Ver. 25. *And behold, men passed by, and saw the carcase cast in the way, and the lion standing by the carcase: and they came and told it in the city where the old prophet dwelt.*] As a wonderful Thing;



Thing; that the Lion should neither fall upon his Prey, nor hurt them who passed by; but suffered them to go on quietly.

Ver. 26. *And when the prophet that brought him back from the way heard thereof, he said, It is the man of God, that was disobedient to the word of the LORD:]* Disobedience in great Cases hath been thus punished by Men in Authority. For the *Athenians* put their Ambassadors to Death, whom they had sent into *Arcadia*, though they had performed their Business very well, to their Content, ἐπεὶ ἑτέρων ὁδὸν ἦλθον, καὶ ἐ τὴν περὶ σταγμένον, because they came another Way, and not that which they were prescribed. Which is the very Case before us, *Ælian*, Lib. vi. Var. Histor. Cap. 5.

*Therefore the LORD hath delivered him unto the lion, who hath torn him and slain him according to the word of the LORD, which he spake unto him.]* The Lion did not rend his Body in Pieces, but only gave him one Wound, which killed him. In the *Hebrew* the Word is, *he broke him*; that is his Bones, and so slew him speedily.

Ver. 27. *And he spake to his sons, saying, Saddle me the ass. And they saddled him.]* Hearing the Lion stood as quiet as a Lamb, and neither meddled with the Carcase, nor hurt any that passed by, he did not fear to take up the Body of the Prophet that came from *Judah*; believing the Lion had Order to do no other Mischief, but kill him.

Ver. 28. *And he went and found his carcase cast in the way, and the ass and the lion standing by the carcase: the lion had not eat the carcase, nor torn the ass.]* Here is a Cluster of Miracles, that the Lion, contrary to his Nature, did not eat the Carcase, nor kill the Ass, nor meddle with the Travellers that passed by, nor with the old Prophet and his Ass: And that the Ass stood so quietly, and was not frightened at the Sight of a Lion, and betake it self to Flight. And more than this, the Lion stood by the Carcase a long Time, 'till this strange News was carried into the City; as a faithful Keeper of the Prophet's Body, that no other wild Beasts should meddle with it. Which made the Miracle more illustrious; and plainly shewed all this did not happen by Chance.

Ver. 29. *And the prophet took up the carcase of the man of God, and laid it upon the ass, and brought it back: and the old prophet came into the city, to mourn, and to bury him.]* To make a solemn Funeral for him.

Ver. 30. *And he laid his carcase in his own grave,]* Which was the greatest Honour he could do him.

*And they mourned over him, saying, Alas my brother.]* He and his Sons made the usual Lamentation over him; of which this was the Form, we find, in After-Times, *Jer.* xxii. 18.

Ver. 31. *And it came to pass after he had buried him, that he spake unto his sons, saying, When I am dead, then bury me in the sepulchre wherein the man of God is buried, lay my bones beside his bones.]* This he ordered, not meerly out of Affection to the Prophet, but to secure himself from the Judgment that he had threatened, ver. 2.

Ver. 32. *For the saying which he cried by the word of the LORD against the Altar in Bethel,*

*and against all the houses of the high places that are in the cities of Samaria, shall surely come to pass.]* This *Abarbinel* looks upon as an Argument that this Man was a Prophet of the LORD; that he foretold the same Thing that the Man of God who came from *Judah*, did. And, as he thinks, something more; viz. the Destruction of all the High Places by *Josiah*, which is not before mentioned.

Ver. 33. *After this thing Jeroboam returned not from his evil way,]* By all these wonderful Works (for the singular Number is put for the plural) *Jeroboam* was not at all changed; but continued in his Idolatry.

*But made again of the lowest of the people, priests of the high places:]* He did not reform in any one Thing; but still went on in making any body Priests. See xii. 31.

*Whosoever would, he consecrated him, and he became one of the priests of the high places.]* Without any Respect to his Tribe, or Family; or indeed, to his Condition.

Ver. 34. *And this thing became sin to the house of Jeroboam, even to cut it off, and destroy it from the face of the earth.]* Brought dreadful Punishments upon his Family (for so Sin sometimes signifies the Punishment of Sin) and these not vulgar Punishments, but utter Extirpation.

## CHAP. XIV.

Verse 1. *A* T that time] Some Time after those Woes were denounced against him; but the Phrase doth not denote any precise Time.

*Abijah the son of Jeroboam was sick.]* Being stricken by the Hand of God, with some Disease.

Ver. 2. *And Jeroboam said to his wife, Arise, I pray thee, and disguise thy self,]* Put on such Apparel as the common People wear.

*That thou be not known to be the wife of Jeroboam:]* He would have her go on this Errand, because he was sure she would report Things truly to him: But yet would not have her known to be his Wife, because he would have the Prophet speak more freely and indifferently: Or, perhaps, he was afraid he should threaten too heavily, if he knew who she was.

*And get thee to Shiloh; behold there is the prophet Abijah, which told me I should be king over this people.]* This looks like great Stupidity, that he should think to deceive a Prophet, who could tell him future Events: And therefore much more discover Things present.

Ver. 3. *And take with thee ten loaves, and cracknels, and a cruse of bony, and go to him: he shall tell thee what shall become of the child.]* They that went to enquire of a Prophet, used to make him some Present, as a Token of their Respect to him. See 1 *Sam.* ix. 7. And by such Oblations the Prophets supported themselves. This Present which she made him was of such Things as might make him think her to be a Countrywoman, rather than a Courtier.

Ver. 4. *And Jeroboams wife did so, and arose, and went to Shiloh, and came to the house of Abijah: but Abijah could not see, for his eyes were set by reason of his age.]* In the *Hebrew* his Eyes stood for his hoariness. He seems to have a Film, or a Cataract grown over his Eyes.

Ver. 5.



Ver. 5. *And the LORD said unto Abijah, Behold, the wife of Jeroboam cometh to ask a thing of thee for her son, for he is sick: thus and thus shalt thou say unto her: for it shall be when she cometh to thee, that she shall feign her self to be another woman.]* He was as fully instructed how to treat her, as if he had seen, and known her.

Ver. 6. *And it came to pass, when Abijah heard the sound of her feet, as she came in at the door, that he said, Come in thou wife of Jeroboam, why feignest thou thy self to be another? for I am sent to thee with heavy tidings.]* He discovered her before she appeared, that she might give the greater Credit to his Words.

Ver. 7. *Go tell Jeroboam, Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, Forasmuch as I exalted thee from among the people, and made thee prince over my people Israel,]* Raised him from a private Person, to be the King of the ten Tribes.

Ver. 8. *And rent the kingdom away from the house of David, and gave it thee; and yet thou hast not been as my servant David, who kept my commandments, and who followed me with all his heart, to do that only which was right in mine eyes,]* Though David committed some great Sins, yet he was upright in his Religion, and never started aside in the least unto other gods. In which Piety God expected Jeroboam should have continued, as he admonished him, when he first sent Abijah to him, xi. 38.

Ver. 9. *But hast done evil above all that were before thee:]* King Saul was not so bad; nor Solomon: Who though he was drawn aside himself, yet did not study to make his People Idolaters.

*For thou hast gone and made thee other gods, and molten images,]* Or, even molten images; that is, the Golden Calves. Which he did not think to be gods, but only Representations of God: And yet God looked upon this Worship which was paid to him before these Images, as the Worship of other gods: Which are called Devils, in 2 Chron. xi. 15.

*To provoke me to anger,]* That was the Effect of this idolatrous Worship.

*And hast cast me behind thy back:]* Neglected me and my Service. For those things we cast behind our Backs, which are nothing worth; and for which we have no Regard or Concern what becomes of them.

Ver. 10. *Therefore, behold, I will bring evil upon the house of Jeroboam,]* Severely punish it.

*And will cut off from Jeroboam him that pisseth against the wall,]* That is, not leave a Man of his Family alive, as Ralbag interprets it. See 1 Sam. xxv. 22.

*And him that is shut up, and left in Israel,]* That is, married or unmarried, as de Dieu expounds these Words upon Deut. xxxii. 36. all sorts of Men, of whatsoever State or Condition they be. Others refer this to Treasures shut up in secret Places, and to Flocks left in the Field; or, to Men taken Captive, or that have escaped. As much as to say, there shall be an Universal Destruction.

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And thus Bochartus glosses, (comprehending all these) *I will cut off every male, whether he be a captive, or a free man; whether he live in the city, or in the country; be married or single.* See his Hierozoicon, P. 1. Lib. 2. Cap. 66.

*And I will take away the remnant of the house of Jeroboam,]* All his Posterity.

*As a man taketh away dung, 'till it be all gone.]* Which Servants remove so carefully, that they suffer not the least Speck to remain.

Ver. 11. *Him that dieth of Jeroboam in the city shall the dogs eat; and him that dieth in the field, shall the fowls of the air eat:]* That is, none of them shall be buried.

*For the LORD hath spoken it.]* This is God's irrevocable Decree.

Ver. 12. *Arise thou therefore, get thee unto thy own house, and when thy feet enter the city, the child shall die.]* This was a sign that all the rest of his Threatnings should be fulfilled.

Ver. 13. *And all Israel shall mourn for him, and bury him: for he only of Jeroboam shall come to the grave,]* All the rest were to be buried in the Bowels of Dogs, and of Fowls of the Air, ver. 11.

*Because in him is found some good thing toward the LORD God of Israel, in the house of Jeroboam.]* He was the only Person of that Family that disliked the Worship of the Calves, and perhaps intended to remove them when he had Power; and suffer the People to go up to Jerusalem to worship, trusting God would preserve him in his Kingdom. Some of the Jews say, that he broke down a Hedge which his Father had made, to keep People from going to Jerusalem, at the three great Feasts.

Ver. 14. *Moreover, the LORD shall raise him up a king over Israel, who shall cut off the house of Jeroboam]* This King was Baasha, xv. 27, 28.

*This day:]* As soon as he was made King, ver. 29.

*But what? even now.]* What did I say? (that day) even just now. It is as sure as if it were now done. The Chaldee takes it otherwise; he shall destroy the House of Jeroboam; both that which liveth now at this Day, and that which shall be born in Time to come. But Kimchi puts no Stop at this Word *Venah* (and what) but continues it with what follows, in this manner, *what is this which shall now happen, to that which shall come hereafter?* That is, the present Calamities shall be nothing to the future. Which agrees well enough with what follows, concerning the continual Troubles that should be in Israel; and at last their Captivity.

Ver. 15. *And the LORD shall smite Israel,]* For their consenting to that idolatrous Worship which Jeroboam set up.

*As a reed is shaken in the water,]* That is, they shall be in perpetual Commotions by Civil Wars: Having no Quiet, but frequently changing their Kings. Thus Bochartus excellently expounds it, in an Epistle to our Bishop Morley, p. 106, &c. The Reason of this Expression was, that several



of their Kings were afterwards killed, and new Families started up; and between so many Kings of so many Families and Tribes, their Minds fluctuated and wavered; and they knew not where to fix themselves, and rest in Quiet: Therefore their Condition is thus described in 2 Chron. xv. 5. *There was no peace to him that went in, or to him that came out, &c.*

*And he shall root up Israel out of this good land, which he gave to their fathers,]* Which he began to do first by Tiglath-Pileser King of Assyria, 2 Kings xv. 29. And then finished it by Shalmaneser, 2 Kings xvii. 5, 6, &c.

*And shall scatter them beyond the river,]* That is, *Euphrates*: They being carried (as the fore-named Places tell us) into the Country of the Medes.

*Because they have made their groves,]* In which they placed the Images of their gods. For they were not contented with the Calves, but fell to grosser Idolatry; which was commonly practised in Groves. See Judges iii. 7.

*Provoking the LORD to anger.]* For nothing was so detestable to him as this Sin.

Ver. 16. *And he shall give Israel up,]* In to the Hands of the Heathen.

*Because of the sins of Jeroboam, who did sin, and who made Israel to sin.]* Perverted the whole Nation: Who by his Authority and Example were led into Idolatry.

Ver. 17. *And Jeroboams wife arose and departed, and came to Tirzah:]* A City in the Tribe of Manasseh: Which had been famous in ancient Times, (Josh. xii. 24.) and became the Royal Seat, and continued so for some Time, (xv. 33.) being found more convenient, I suppose, than Shechem where Jeroboam first settled.

*And when she came to the threshold of the door, the child died.]* It seems the King's House was near the Gate of the City: For it is said, ver. 12. that as soon as she entered into the City, the Child should die. And so it did, when she came to the Threshold of the Door of the Palace.

Ver. 18. *And they buried him; and all Israel mourned for him, according to the word of the LORD, which he spake by the hand of his servant Abijah the prophet.]* Whereby he confirmed all the rest of his Threatnings against the House of Jeroboam and the People of Israel.

Ver. 19. *And the rest of the acts of Jeroboam, how he warred, and how he reigned,]* How he behaved himself in War, and in Peace.

*Behold, they are written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel.]* Not in that Book in the Bible, called *Chronicles*; but in such a Book as that wherein the Acts of Solomon were recorded, Day by Day, xi. 41. See there.

Ver. 20. *And the days that Jeroboam reigned were two and twenty years: and he slept with his fathers, and Nadab his son reigned in his stead.]* His sleeping with his Fathers seems to be a Phrase signifying only that he died, as all before him did: Not that he was buried with them (as it is said of Rehoboham, ver. 31. for they were private Men, and he a King; who,

no doubt, was magnificently interred by his Son.

Ver. 21. *And Rehoboham the son of Solomon reigned in Judah: Rehoboham was forty and one years old when he began to reign,]* And therefore was born a Year before Solomon came to the Crown: For he reigned but forty Years, xi. 42.

*And he reigned seventeen years in Jerusalem, the city which the LORD had chosen out of all the tribes of Israel, to put his name there:]* A great Honour to him; of which he was not worthy; and therefore God shortened his Days, and did not let him reign so long as Jeroboam.

*And his mothers name was Naamah an Ammonitess.]* It is much that David should suffer Solomon to marry one of his Country; unless she was proselyted, as the Daughter of Pharaoh is supposed to have been. He himself indeed had married the Daughter of Talmai King of Geshur; but the Son he had by her proved so wicked, that it might have been a Caution to him not to marry his Son, especially him he intended for the Heir of his Crown, to a Stranger. Who if she was proselyted, yet many think she did not so change her Religion, but that she instilled ill Principles into her Son, and corrupted him. Nay, was one of those Women that inticed Solomon to Idolatry; for Women of Ammon are reckoned among his strange Wives.

Ver. 22. *And Judah did evil in the sight of the LORD, and they provoked him to jealousy, with their sins which they had committed,]* By joining other gods together with him. Which is an amazing thing, that at the Beginning of his Reign Rehoboham should do well for three Years (2 Chron. xi. 17.) and then forsook the Law of God (2 Chron. xii. 1.) and fell off from his Worship, into such gross Idolatry, as exceeded that of Jeroboam's.

*Above all that their fathers had done.]* Above all that had been practised in the Time of the Judges.

Ver. 23. *For they also built them high places, and images, and groves on every high hill, and under every green tree.]* They multiplied Altars on every high Hill; and set up Images; and built Temples for them: Which I take to be meant by Groves. For they could not be under every green Tree; nor could they be said to be built, but to be planted; therefore it is reasonable to interpret them Temples, or Places of Divine Worship. As among the Heathen Strabo testifies (Geograph. Lib. 9.) that the Poets called their Temples by the Name of Groves (*ἄλση καλεῖσιν τὰ ἱερά παύτα*) though they had no Trees about them; because the Custom was to have Trees planted about their Sacred Places. In which the Israelites set up Altars; directly contrary to the Law: Which intended to preserve Unity in Religion, by allowing one Altar only.

Ver. 24. *And there were also Sodomites in the land,]* This kind of Wickedness often attended Idolatry, xv. 12. 2 Kings xxiii. 7. Rom. i. 21, 28. For among the Heathen the most filthy things were practised in these shady dark Places



Places (their Groves) by the Worshippers of *Venus, Bacchus, and Priapus*. And such there were, it appears by the Place now quoted, 2 *Kings* xxiii. 7. among the *Israelites*: Who out of Devotion to some false god or other, prostituted their Bodies, contrary to Nature, to be abused in Honour of those gods, directly against the Law, *Deut.* xxiii. 17. For when *Josiah* purged the Temple, he is said to cast out the *Sodomites*: Where by *Kedeschim* our *Selden* understands the Priests of *Astarte*. *Synag.* 2. *De Diis Syris*. Cap. 2.

Ver. 25. *And it came to pass that in the fifth year of king Rehoboam, Shishak king of Egypt came up against Jerusalem:*] *Ποσειδάων δ' αὐτὰν παρέδωκε ἀμαχητὲ τὴν πόλιν.* And *Rehoboam* (as *Josephus* writes) delivered up the City to him, without striking a stroke. For he had a vast Army (as we read, 2 *Chron.* xii. 2.) wherewith he conquered *Asia*, as *Herodotus* tells us, who calls him *Sesostris*. For *Josephus* acknowledgeth he relates the same Expedition that the Scripture doth; but under a different Name. It may seem something strange that *Shishak* being so nearly allied to *Rehoboam*, should come up against him, and take his Royal City: But as Kingdoms are never married, so *Jeroboam*, it is likely, who had lived long in *Egypt*, stirred him up to invade him; and thereby established himself in his new Kingdom: For we read not a Word of any Cities in *Israel* that he took; but only the fenced Cities of *Judah* (2 *Chron.* xii. 4.) *Jeroboam* and his Country remaining undisturbed. Besides, it must be remembered he was not the Son of *Pharaoh's* Daughter, but of an *Ammonitess*: And therefore there was no Kindred between *Rehoboam* and *Shishak*.

Ver. 26. *And he took away the treasures of the house of the LORD, and the treasures of the kings house, he even took away all;*] These Riches which *David* and *Solomon* had treasured up, tempted *Shishak*, it is probable, to this Expedition against *Jerusalem*: For he did not intend to keep this City, but only to spoil it.

*And he took away the shields of gold which Solomon had made.*] Which were in the House of the Forest of *Lebanon* (See x. 16, 17.) which it seems he also plundered. This was a speedy Vengeance for their Sins; that so soon after *Solomon's* Death, the Splendor wherein he left *Jerusalem* should be extinguished. For *Rehoboam* served God three Years; was corrupted in the fourth; and in the fifth was punished.

Ver. 27. *And king Rehoboam made in their stead brazen shields, and committed them into the hands of the chief guard,*] In the Hebrew the Word for Guard is *Runner*: So called because they went before the King, and behind him.

*Which kept the door of the kings house.*] These Shields were not of much Value; and so were committed to Men in a mean Office: Whereas the Golden ones were kept, as I said, in the House of the Forest of *Lebanon*.

Ver. 28. *And it was so when the king went into the house of the LORD, that the guard bare them, and brought them back into the guard-chamber.*] He did not quite forsake God, but still continued to worship in the Temple: And perhaps

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he now left the high Places (after he had been thus chastised by the King of *Egypt*) and frequented the House of God better. Shields were carried before him thither, for Pomp sake, that he might not be contemned by his People; and that there might be no Occasion for Sedition, if they were disposed to it, when they saw him so well guarded.

Ver. 29. *Now the rest of the acts of Rehoboam, and all that he did, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah?*] He refers those that desired a larger Account of him, to the publick *Annals*, as he had done when he concludes the History of *Jeroboam*, v. 19. See there.

Ver 30. *And there was war between Rehoboam and Jeroboam all their days.*] This doth not seem to agree with what we read xii. 22. where God commanded *Rehoboam* and his People not to go to fight with *Israel*; and they obeyed his Voice. But this is easily satisfied, by observing that the *Jews* were commanded not to make War upon the *Israelites*; but they are not commanded not to defend themselves, if the *Israelites* made War upon them. And this was their Case; the *Israelites* vexed them with continual Incursions and Depredations; though the House of *David* did not assault them, but only repel their Violence: Or, perhaps upon the Borders, they were continually endeavouring to get Ground one of another; though they never came to a set Battle.

Ver. 31. *And Rehoboam slept with his fathers, and was buried with his fathers in the city of David: and his mothers name was Naamah, an Ammonitess.*] The Repetition of this about his Mother hath something remarkable in it (See ver. 21.) though it is hard to know what it is. *Abarbinel* thinks, it is as much as to say, he did not repent at last; but as he lived, so he died, in the Idolatry of his Mother.

*And Abijam his son reigned in his stead.*]

## CHAP. XV.

Verse i. **N**OW in the eighteenth year of king *Jeroboam* the son of *Nebat*, reigned *Abijam* over *Judah*.] Which seems to disagree with what is said below, ver. 9. concerning *Asa*, that he began to reign the twentieth Year of *Jeroboam*, and *Abijam* reigned three Years. But it is usual both in Scripture, and in other Authors, to reckon Part of a Year for a whole Year. So *Abijam* began to reign in some Part of *Jeroboam's* eighteenth Year, and continued his Reign the whole nineteenth; and died in the twentieth: and so was reckoned to have reigned three Years, as it here follows.

Ver. 2. *Three years reigned he in Jerusalem:*] This was a very short Time, as *Abarbinel* observes; but it was because he walked in the Way of his Father; which provoked God to cut him off.

*And his mothers name was Maacah, the daughter of Abishalom,*] The same Author fancies she was the Daughter of *Abshalom* (as he is called 2 *Chron.* xi. 21.) who rebelled against his Father *David*; and so was a bad Daughter of

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a bad Father. She is called by another Name, 2 Chron. xiii. 2. viz. *Michaiab the daughter of Uriel*. But he thinks that is the Name of the Family, and this her proper Name. Others think this a meer Fancy, and with great Reason; for *Abisbalom* is a different Name from *Abisalom*, as *David's* Son is always called. And they think he had two Names, as his Daughter also had. But *Pellicanus* seems to me to have given the plainest Account of this, that *Maachab* was his Grandmother, and *Micaiah* his Mother.

Ver. 3. *And he walked in all the sins of his father, which he had done before him:]* See xiv. 22, 23, 24.

*And his heart was not perfect with the LORD his God, as the heart of David his father.]* They ought all to have remembered *David*, and trod in his Steps; who was the Founder of the Royal Family; and never turned aside to the Worship of other gods, as this Man did; though together with them he worshipped the LORD God of *Israel*, who is therefore called the LORD his God.

Ver. 4. *Nevertheless, for Davids sake, the LORD his God gave him a lamp in Jerusalem, to set up his son after him,]* He continued the Kingdom in the Posterity of *David*: Which is the Meaning of giving him a lamp. See xi. 36.

*And to establish Jerusalem:]* Whereby *Jerusalem* was established as the Place of God's Worship.

Ver. 5. *Because David did that which was right in the eyes of the LORD, and turned not aside from any thing that he commanded him, all the days of his life; save only in the matter of Uriah the Hittite.]* He was not without other Sins; but none so enormous as this; and therefore not remembered, as this about *Uriah* is very often, to his Dishonour.

Ver. 6. *And there was war between Rehoboam and Jeroboam all the days of his life.]* This was said before; xiv. 30. and therefore may seem to come in here impertinently; because he is not speaking of *Rehoboam*, but of his Son *Abijam*: Who was a valiant young Man in the days of his Father, and always fought his Battles with *Jeroboam*. Which being related before in the History of *Rehoboam*, is here repeated, as *Abarbinel* thinks, to shew that *Abijam* was the Cause of these Wars. And these Words, *all his days*, he thinks, relate to *Abijam*, who continued the War between his Father and *Jeroboam* with great Success: As we read 2 Chron. xiii. 17. *Bochartus* thinks a plainer Account may be given of this, by supposing that *Rehoboam* signifies this Son of his; Children and Fathers being one and the same in a moral Account. Thus *Abraham* is said to have purchased the Sepulchre of the Sons of *Emor*; which was indeed purchased by *Jacob*: And the *Israelites* say to *Rehoboam*, (xii. 16.) What Portion have we in *David*? That is, in *Rehoboam* the Grand-child of *David*. In like manner he thinks it may be said, *there was war between Rehoboam and Jeroboam*, that is, between *Abijam*, the Son of *Rehoboam*, and *Jeroboam*: Whom *Abijam* grievously afflicted. *Hierozoi-*

*con*, P. I. Lib. II. Cap. 43. But this doth not seem to be the true Account; because the War between *Abijam* and *Jeroboam* is distinctly mentioned in the next Verse. Therefore the Meaning of these Words is, that though God was pleased, for *David's* Sake, who walked uprightly before him, to continue a Lamp, that is, a Successor to him in *Jerusalem*; yet these Successors were vexed with continual Wars, (as appeared both in the Reign of *Rehoboam* and of *Abijam*) and did not enjoy their Kingdom peaceably.

Ver. 7. *Now the rest of the acts of Abijam, and all that he did, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah?]* See xi. 41. *Ezra* saith they were recorded in the Book of the Prophet *Iddo*, 2 Chron. xiii. 22. from whence he took what he thought fit.

*And there was war between Abijam and Jeroboam.]* He continued the War, which had been between his Father and *Jeroboam*; and managed it very gloriously, as *Ezra* shews in the Book of the *Chronicles*.

Ver. 8. *And Abijam slept with his fathers, and they buried him in the city of David: and Asa his son reigned in his stead.*

Ver. 9. *In the twentieth year of Jeroboam king of Israel, reigned Asa over Judah.]* In some part of that Year. See ver. 2.

Ver. 10. *And one and forty years reigned he in Jerusalem: and his mothers name was Maachab the daughter of Abisbalom.]* This was the Name of his Grand-mother; who is called his Mother, as *Roguel* is called the Father of *Jethro's* Daughter, (*Exod.* ii. 18.) when he was their Grandfather. Which Example *Kimchi* here alledges to explain this. And thus *Abarbinel*: The Sense is not, that *Maachab* brought forth *Asa* (for she was his Father's Mother) but she brought him up and gave him his Education. Which made his Piety the more remarkable, that he was not tainted with her Principles of Religion as his Father was. But why his Mother should not be mentioned, but his Grand-mother, which was not at all needful (because it was evident, by what was said before, that *Maachab* was the Mother of *Abijam* his Father) is unaccountable. And therefore others think that this was the Name of his Mother: Which was the same, as her Father's also was, with that of *Abijam's*.

Ver. 11. *And Asa did that which was right in the sight of the LORD, as did David his father.]* He made him his Pattern: Worshipping the LORD alone; and taking away all Idols, as it here follows.

Ver. 12. *And he took away the Sodomites out of the land, and removed all the idols that his father had made.]* Of which see xiv. 23, 24. But still some secretly remained; and therefore when it is said he removed all Idols, the Meaning is all that he could discover; for some lurked privately, xxii. 46.

Ver. 13. *And also Maachab his mother, even her he removed from being queen,]* He took away her Guards, all the Ensigns of Royal Dignity; and reduced her to the Condition of a private Person. But the Word *being* is not in the *Hebrew*; which others translate, *he removed her*



her from the Queen. That is, from his Wife; that she might not be infected with her Idolatry. He put her therefore out of the Court, where she gave a bad Example.

*Because she had made an idol in a grove.]* The Word we translate idol, is *Miphlezeth*, which imports something of Terror and Horror; either because it was of a frightful Aspect, or brought dreadful Judgments upon its Worshipers. St Hieron understands by it *Priapus*, or *Baal-Peor*, to whom the Women were much devoted. *Theodore*t takes it for *Astarte* or *Venus*: And indeed in the Northern Countries *Priapus* and *Venus* were painted together, as *Johan. Gensius* observes in his Book *De Victimis Humanis*, P. I. Cap. 9. Whatsoever it was, it was placed in a Grove; in which shady Places all the Works of Darknes, even Sodomy it self, were practised.

*Asa destroyed her idol, and burnt it by the brook Kidron.]* He cut it down, and having burnt it, stamped it to a Powder; and then threw it into the Brook *Kidron*; as *Moses* did with the Golden Calf, *Exod.* xxxii. 20. See 2 *Chron.* xv. 16.

Ver. 14. *But the high places were not removed: nevertheless, Asa his heart was perfect with the LORD all his days.]* He did take away all the high Places, wherein they sacrificed to strange Gods (2 *Chron.* xiv. 3.) but not those wherein God alone was worshipped: For his Authority was not great enough to do this; the People having so universally and so long taken this Licence, that none durst attempt to abolish this inveterate Custom 'till the Days of *Hezekiah*: Who seeing the Calamities that were coming upon his Country, endeavoured to prevent them, by a thorough Reformation. But though *Asa* did not venture to do this, yet his Heart was sincerely affected to the right Worship of God; and he suffered Sacrifices to be offered to none else.

Ver. 15. *And he brought in the things which his father had dedicated, and the things which himself had dedicated, into the house of the LORD, silver and gold, and vessels.]* According to the Piety of ancient Times, his Father had vowed some part of the Spoils he took in the War with *Jeroboam* unto the LORD; but had not Time to make good his Vow; or upon some Account or other neglected it. *Asa* his Son therefore made his Vow good; and also himself brought in what he had devoted unto holy Uses, (for so the Words are in the Hebrew, *he brought in the holy things of his father, &c.*) having gotten great Spoil in his War with the *Ethiopians*, 2 *Chron.* xiv. 13, 14.

Ver. 16. *And there was war between Asa and Baasha king of Israel all their days.]* There having been no Mention hitherto made of *Baasha*, this may seem not to stand in its proper Place. But *Abarbinel* thinks it is here inserted, that as this Divine Writer had shewn what his Virtues were, so he might now mention his Faults. The chief of which was occasioned by this War: Which moved him to send to *Benbadad* for Help; when he should have relied upon God; as it is related largely, 2 *Chron.* xvi. 7, &c.

Ver. 17. *And Baasha king of Israel went up against Judah,]* After *Asa* his great Victory over the *Ethiopians*, a great many of the *Israelites* fell off to him from *Baasha*: Who thereupon resolved to make War upon *Judah*, and thereby prevent a further Defection of his Subjects.

*And built Ramah,]* A City in the Tribe of *Benjamin*: Which either belonged to the Kingdom of *Israel*; or he had taken from *Judah* and fortified it; for that is meant by *building* it, as appears by what follows.

*That he might not suffer any to go out, or come in to Asa king of Judah.]* That he might hinder all Communication between his People and the People of *Judah*. For this Place lay in the Confines of both Kingdoms; and in such a Strait, that a Fortification being made there, none could pass to and fro without a Licence from *Baasha*.

Ver. 18. *Then Asa took all the silver and gold that was left in the treasures of the house of the LORD, and in the treasures of the kings house, and delivered them into the hands of his servants: And king Asa sent them to Benhadad, the son of Tabrimon, the son of Hezion, king of Syria, that dwelt at Damascus, saying,]* This was held lawful, in case of extream Danger, to employ sacred things for the Defence of one's Country. But here was no such Necessity in this Case; for God had appeared so wonderfully for *Asa*, against a more powerful Enemy than *Baasha*, that he ought to have confided in him for Help; as the Prophet *Hanani* told him, 2 *Chron.* xvi. 7, &c.

Ver. 19. *There is a league between me and thee, and between my father and thy father:]* In the latter End of *Solomon's* Reign the *Syrians* were Enemies to him, xi. 24, 25. But when he was dead, and the Kingdom was divided, both *Judah* and *Israel* made Peace with the *Syrians*: Having enough to do, to settle themselves in their own Dominions.

*Behold, I have sent unto thee a present of silver and gold; come and break thy league with Baasha king of Israel, that he may depart from me.]* This was a wicked piece of Policy, to tempt him with Money to break his Word, which perhaps he had sworn to observe.

Ver. 20. *So Benbadad hearkened unto king Asa, and sent the captain of his hosts, which he had,]* Always in a Readiness, for some Expedition, or for the Defence of his Country.

*Against the cities of Israel, and smote Ijon, and Dan, and Abel-beth-maachab, and all Cinneroth, with all the land of Naphtali.]* By this it appears, that he fell upon the Northern Part of the Kingdom of *Israel*, which was nearest to *Damascus*; whilst *Baasha* was busy at *Ramah*, which was in the more Southern Part of his Dominions.

Ver. 21. *And it came to pass, that when Baasha heard thereof, that he left off building of Ramah,]* By this Means *Asa* compassed his Ends; it not being safe for *Baasha* to continue the Work he was about, for fear *Benbadad* should make larger Conquests than he had already done.

*And dwelt in Tirzath.]* Which was become the Royal City, (See xiv. 17.) where *Baasha* settled



settled himself; though he intended, I suppose, when he had finished *Ramah*, to have dwelt there some Part of the Year; that by his Presence the Passages might have been the better secured.

Ver. 22. *Then king Asa made a proclamation throughout all Judah (none was exempted)]* He summoned all the People of the Country; who were not disabled by Age, or Sickness, or some other way,

*And they took away the stones; and the timber thereof, wherewith Baasha had builded; and king Asa built with them Geba of Benjamin, and Mizpah.]* They were inhabited before, but he enlarged, and perhaps fortified them. Which he judged better than to perfect the Fortification of *Ramah*; which would have been a perpetual Bone of Contention (as we speak) between *Judah* and *Israel*.

Ver. 23. *And the rest of the acts of Asa, and all his might, and all that he did, and the cities which he built, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah?]* See xi. 41.

*Nevertheless in the time of his old age he was diseased in his feet.]* He had the Gout, as the *Gemara* of the *Sanhedrin* explains it, Cap. vi. N. 7. which made him less active than he had been before this Disease seized him.

Ver. 24. *And Asa slept with his fathers, and was buried with his fathers, in the city of David his father: and Jehoshaphat his son reigned in his stead.*

Ver. 25. *And Nadab the son of Jeroboam began to reign over Israel in the second year of Asa king of Judah, and reigned over Israel two years.]* Part of two Years, as appears from ver. 28 and 33.

Ver. 26. *And he did evil in the sight of the LORD, and walked in the way of his father, and in his sin, wherewith he made Israel to sin.]* By the Worship of the Golden Calves.

Ver. 27. *And Baasha the son of Abijah, of the house of Issachar,]* That is, of a Family in the Tribe of *Issachar*.

*Conspired against him, and Baasha smote him at Gibbethon, which belonged to the Philistines (for Nadab and all Israel laid siege to Gibbethon.)* It was a City in the Tribe of *Dan*, *Josh.* xix. 44. and given to the *Levites*, xxi. 23. who quitted it, as they did the rest of their Cities, when *Jeroboam* would not suffer them to execute their Office (2 *Chron.* xi. 14.) and the *Philistines* it is likely seized upon it, being adjoining to their Country. But *Nadab* now endeavoured to recover it out of their Hands, as of right belonging to him.

Ver. 28. *Even in the third year of Asa king of Judah did Baasha slay him, and reigned in his stead.]* What was the Pretence for this Conspiracy we are not told; but it is likely he had many joined with him in it; otherwise it had not been easy to slay him, when he was in the midst of his Army before *Gibbethon*.

Ver. 29. *And it came to pass, when he reigned, that he smote all the house of Jeroboam, he left not to Jeroboam any that breathed, until he had destroyed him, according to the saying of the LORD, which he spake by Abijah the Shilonite:]*

His Intention was not to fulfil this Prophecy (mentioned xiv. 10.) but to secure himself in his usurped Throne; by cutting off all that had any Title to it. But by this Means God fulfilled his own Intentions; and that as speedily as *Abijah* the Prophet had foretold, xiv. 14.

Ver. 30. *Because of the sins of Jeroboam which he sinned, and which he made Israel to sin by his provocation wherewith he provoked the LORD God of Israel to anger.]* Which caused great Miseries in *Israel*; especially in the Beginning of that Kingdom; when they reigned by Force, not by Succession. Whereas in *Judah* the Son succeeded the Father, by right of Blood, according to the Promise made to *David*.

Ver. 31. *Now the rest of the acts of Nadab, and all that he did, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel?]* His Acts could not be many; yet more were recorded in the publick *Annals* than are here mentioned, xi. 41.

Ver. 32. *And there was war between Asa and Baasha king of Israel, all their days.]* We read the very same Words before (ver. 16.) in the History of *Asa*; which are now repeated in the History of *Baasha*; to shew the Reason why *Asa* was his Enemy, which he would not have been (but his Friend) had he feared God after his cutting off the whole House of *Jeroboam*. But he would make no Covenant with him, notwithstanding he had fulfilled the Word of God, because he walked in the Sins of *Jeroboam*. Thus *Abarbinel*.

Ver. 33. *And in the third year of Asa king of Judah, began Baasha the son of Abijah to reign over all Israel in Tirzah, twenty and four years.*

Ver. 34. *And he did evil in the sight of the LORD, and walked in the way of Jeroboam, and in his sin wherewith he made Israel to sin.]* Which makes it evident, that he did not cut off *Jeroboam's* Family because they were Idolaters; but because he aspired to the Throne; which when he possessed, he endeavoured to establish himself in it, by the same wicked Policy which *Jeroboam* used. For he reformed nothing in Religion; but continued to worship the Calves which *Jeroboam* had set up; to keep the People from going to worship at *Jerusalem*.

## CHAP. XVI.

Verse 1. **A**ND the word of the LORD came to *Jehu* the son of *Hanani* against *Baasha*, saying,] This is a Prophet that lived till the End of *Jehoshaphat's* Reign. See 2 *Chron.* xix. 1. xx. 34. And his Father *Hanani* was a Prophet before him, 2 *Chron.* xvi. 7. Nor was there wanting a Succession of Prophets during the Kingdoms of *Israel* and *Judah*, as *Abarbinel* hath observed through every Reign, their Names being set down in holy Scripture: He hath shewn in a Catalogue he hath made of the Kings, and the Prophets in their Time; too long to be here transcribed.

Ver. 2.



Ver. 2. *Forasmuch as I have exalted thee out of the dust,]* It seems he was of a mean Family in the Tribe of *Issachar*. Perhaps, but a common Soldier, or some small Officer in the Army which laid Siege to *Gibbethon*; but being bold and daring, formed a Conspiracy against *Nadab*.

*And made thee prince of my people Israel,]* God's Providence interposed, that nothing should hinder the Success of his Design against *Nadab*: Because he intended to make use of him to punish the House of *Feroboam*.

*And thou hast walked in the way of Feroboam, and hast made my people Israel to sin, to provoke me to anger by their sins:]* Continued them in their Idolatry; against which he ought to have shewn the greatest Zeal; because it provoked God's Anger against the Family of *Feroboam*.

Ver. 3. *Behold, I will take away the posterity of Baasha, and the posterity of his house: and will make thy house like the house of Feroboam the son of Nebat.]* So that neither any of his own Children, or the Children of any of his Relations should remain; but his Name be quite put out.

Ver. 4. *Him that dieth of Baasha in the city shall the dogs eat: and him that dieth in the field shall the fowls of the air eat.]* The very same Threatning that was pronounced against *Feroboam* and his Posterity, by *Abijah*, xiv. 11.

Ver. 5. *Now the rest of the acts of Baasha, and what he did, and his might, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel?*

Ver. 6. *So Baasha slept with his fathers, and was buried in Tirzah, and Elah his son reigned in his stead.]* He was not slain, as *Nadab* was; but died, as *Feroboam* did; and his Son suffered like his, ver. 9, 10.

Ver. 7. *And also by the hand of the prophet Jehu the son of Hanani, came the word of the LORD against Baasha, and against his house,]* This Command of God being given to *Jehu*, ver. 1. he executed it, and delivered this Message to *Baasha* some Time before he died. Which is said to be done by the hand of *Jehu*, because he was the Minister of God in this Business.

*Even for all the evil that he did in the sight of the LORD, in provoking him to anger with the work of his hands; in being like to Feroboam, and because he killed him.]* That is, killed *Nadab*, who was *Feroboam's* Son: Or rather (as *Abarbinel* judiciously observes) that relates to the whole House of *Feroboam* before-mentioned; which *Baasha* destroyed not because they were Idolaters, and that he might fulfil the Word of the LORD (as perhaps he pretended) but to satisfy his own Ambition, being guilty of the very same Crime that *Feroboam* was: And therefore was no better than a Murderer in the Slaughter he made of his Family; and accordingly is threatned to be punished for that very Act, which was committed, not in Obedience to God, but to serve himself.

Ver. 8. *And in the twenty and sixth year of Asa king of Judah, began Elah the son of Baasha to reign over Israel]* This seems to contradict what *Ezra* saith in 2 Chron. xvi. that *Baasha* built *Ramah* in the thirty-sixth Year of *Asa*.

Of which I shall give an Account in my Notes on that Place. For the present it may suffice to say, that *Ezra* doth not speak of the thirty-sixth Year of *Asa's* Reign, but of the thirty-sixth Year after the Division of the Kingdom. For it could be, at the most, but the twenty-sixth Year of *Asa's* Reign when *Baasha* died.

*In Tirzah, two years.]* Not compleat; but one intire Year, and part of another: As appears from ver. 10, and 15.

Ver. 9. *And his servant (Zimri, captain of half of his chariots)]* A considerable Commander in his Army, who had a great Interest in the Soldiery.

*Conspired against him as he was in Tirzah, drinking himself drunk in the house of Arza, steward of his house in Tirzah.]* He seems to have been a debauched young Man, who staid at home following his Pleasures, whilst his Army was besieging *Gibbethon*, ver. 15. Which gave *Zimri*, who it is likely was Captain of his Guard, the better Opportunity to kill him.

Ver. 10. *And Zimri went in and smote him, and killed him in the twenty-seventh year of Asa king of Judah, and reigned in his stead.]* Here was a speedy Execution of the Vengeance threatned against him by *Jehu*, that God would make his House like the House of *Feroboam*, ver. 3. For as *Nadab* the Son of *Feroboam* reigned but two Years, xv. 25. so *Elah* the Son of *Baasha* reigned no more: And then, as *Nadab* was killed with the Sword, so was *Elah*. Thus, as *Abarbinel* notes; there was a wonderful Likeness between *Feroboam* and *Baasha*, in their Lives, and in their Deaths; in their Sons, and in their Family.

Ver. 11. *And it came to pass when he began to reign, as soon as he sat on his throne, that he slew all the house of Baasha: he left not one that pisseth against the wall,]* That is, not a Man. See xiv. 10.

*Neither of his kinsfolk, nor of his friends.]* He not only destroyed all that were descended from *Baasha*, as *Baasha* had done the Family of *Feroboam*; but he extended the Destruction, and increased it, as *Abarbinel* speaks for he killed all that were of Kin to *Baasha*, with all his Friends, which *Baasha* did not: This seems to be contained in the Threatning of *Jehu*, ver. 3.

Ver. 12. *Thus Zimri destroyed all the house of Baasha, according to the word of the LORD, which he spake against Baasha by Jehu the prophet;]* Ver. 1, 2, 7.

Ver. 13. *For all the sins of Baasha, and the sins of Elah his son,]* This shews that *Elah* walked in his Father's Ways; though it be not before mentioned.

*By which they sinned, and by which they made Israel to sin, in provoking the LORD God of Israel to anger with their vanities.]* So the Golden Calves are called, being (as *Forsterus* well translates the Word) *Commentitia numina*, Gods of their own devising. See 1 Sam. xii. 21.

Ver. 14. *Now the rest of the acts of Elah, and all that he did, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel?]* Here is no mention of his Might (as there is of his Father's,



ther's, ver. 5.) for he was, as I said, a Man of Pleasure.

Ver. 15. *In the twenty-seventh year of Asa king of Judah did Zimri reign seven days in Tirzah : and the people were encamped against Gibbethon, which belonged to the Philistines.]* Which had been besieged many Years ago, when Baasha slew Nadab, xv. 27. But was then relieved, or afterward retaken by the Philistines, while the Israelites were in a distracted Condition ; but now again invested.

Ver. 16. *And the people that were encamped heard say, Zimri hath conspired, and hath also slain the king :]* Had Success in his Conspiracy, and made himself King.

*Wherefore all Israel made Omri, the captain of the host, king over Israel that day in the camp.]* Just as the Roman Army, in After-times, made their chief Commander Emperor.

Ver. 17. *And Omri went up from Gibbethon, and all Israel with him,]* All the Army that were at the Siege.

*And besieged Tirzah.]* Where Zimri, a more dangerous Enemy, was.

Ver. 18. *And it came to pass, when Zimri saw that the city was taken,]* Which he was not able to defend, against a powerful Army ; from whom he suspected no Opposition ; but hoped they would have let him reign as quietly as they did Baasha.

*That he went into the palace of the kings house,]* Into the strongest Part of the House.

*And burnt the kings house over him with fire, and died ;]* He was afraid, I suppose, of suffering some shameful Punishment, if he had been taken alive ; and therefore chose to die desperately in this manner. So Sardanapalus ended his Life.

Ver. 19. *For his sins which he sinned, in doing evil in the sight of the L.O.R.D, in walking in the way of Jeroboam, and in his sin which he sinned, to make Israel to sin ]* Though he lived but a very short Time after he usurped the Crown, yet he gave sufficient Demonstration of his Resolution to continue the Idolatry of Jeroboam ; and therefore was abandoned by God.

Ver. 20. *Now the rest of the acts of Zimri, and the treason which he wrought, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel ?]* It is likely, other Acts that he did before he conspired against Elah, were recorded in that Book ; together with the Manner how he wrought his Treason.

Ver. 21. *Then were the people of Israel divided into two parts :]* For when it is said, ver. 16. *all Israel made Omri King in the Camp ;* the Meaning is, only the whole Army, and they that attended them.

*Half of the people followed Tibni the son of Ginath, to make him king ;]* For they did not like to have a King imposed upon them by the Soldiery ; and Tibni had as good a Title as the other, being also a valiant Man ; who succeeded Zimri, perhaps, in his Command, as Captain of half his Chariots.

*And half followed Omri.]* As already advanced to the Royal Dignity ; and a greater Man than Tibni ; being Captain of the whole Host.

Ver. 22. *And the people that followed Omri prevailed against the people that followed Tibni the son of Ginath :]* For Omri had the Advantage of having the Army on his Side.

*So Tibni died.]* In this Civil War (into which they fell by God's just Judgment upon them) many of the People, in all likelihood, died together with him.

*And Omri reigned.]* Without Competitor. The Jews in *Seder Olam Rabba*, whom *Rasi* and others follow, say it contributed much to his Advancement, that Asa King of Judah married his Son *Jehoshaphat* to Omri's Daughter. For which they have no other Ground, but that it is said, 2 Chron. xviii. 1. *he joined in affinity with Abab.*

Ver. 23. *In the thirty and one year of Asa king of Judah began Omri to reign over Israel twelve years :]* These twelve Years of his Reign are to be computed not from the thirty-first of Asa's Reign ; for it is evident he began to reign in the twenty-seventh Year of Asa, ver. 15. and his Son began to reign in the thirty-eighth Year of Asa, ver. 29. Therefore the twelve Years are to be computed from the Beginning of Omri's Reign : Which was, as I said, the twenty-seventh of Asa's. From which Time (as *Abarbinel* observes) the Contest continued between Omri and Tibni ; unto the thirty-first Year of King Asa. In the End of which Tibni died ; and then Omri reigned over all Israel, whereas he reigned but over half the People before. And Tibni being extinct, all the foregoing Years are accounted to Omri ; viz. from the Beginning of Asa's seven and twentieth Year, when Zimri died, to the End of this eight and thirtieth Year, which make twelve Years.

*Six years reigned he in Tirzah.]* Half of his Time he made this his Royal Seat ; which was, as some think, all the Time his Contention with Tibni lasted, and some Time after.

Ver. 24. *And he bought the hill of Samaria of Shemer, for two talents of silver ; and built upon the hill, and called the name of the city which he built after the name of Shemer, owner of the hill of Samaria.]* The King's House in Tirzah being burnt, as we read ver. 18. he built a Royal Palace in this City, which he also built upon this Hill ; and called it after the Name of him, who was the Owner of it before he bought it ; viz. *Shemer*, from whom it had the Hebrew Name of *Shomeron*. Which was ever after made the Royal Seat of the Kings of Israel.

Ver. 25. *But Omri wrought evil in the eyes of the L.O.R.D, and did worse than all that were before him.]* For he not only walked in the Way of Jeroboam, but ; it is likely, began to introduce other Idolatries, which his Son *Abab* established among them. Or, he compelled the People to worship the Calves ; and by severe Laws restrained the People from going up to Jerusalem : Which, as some think, are meant by the statutes of Omri, Micah vi. 16.

Ver. 26. *For he walked in all the way of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, and in his sin wherewith he made Israel to sin, to provoke the L.O.R.D God of Israel to anger with their vanities.]* Though he had



had seen *Elah*, and all the whole House of *Baasha* destroyed by his Predecessor for their Idolatry, and *Zimri* himself perished in the same Sin, (ver. 13, 19.) yet he persisted in their Iniquity, and brought down the Wrath of God upon him, and upon his Family, as the foregoing Kings had done.

Ver. 27. *Now the rest of the acts of Omri which he did, and his might which he shewed, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel?*] It seems he was a valiant Man, which *Elah* was not; concerning whose *Might* there is no mention, as I noted upon ver. 14.

Ver. 28. *So Omri slept with his fathers, and was buried in Samaria,*] Which now began, as I said, to be the Royal City of the Kingdom of *Israel*, as *Jerusalem* was of *Judah*.

*And Abab his son reigned in his stead.*] Who was so eminent upon several Accounts, that we have a long Account of him, in the following part of this Book.

Ver. 29. *And in the thirty-eighth year of Asa king of Judah, began Abab the son of Omri to reign over Israel; and Abab reigned over Israel in Samaria, twenty and two years.*] In this Space of Time *Asa* saw six Kings of *Israel* buried; whilst *Judah* flourished under one and the same King: Which no doubt was a great Advantage to them.

Ver. 30. *And Abab the son of Omri did evil in the sight of the LORD, above all that were before him.*] Was more idolatrous than his Father *Omri*: For he brought in the Worship of *Baal*, (as it follows in the next Verse) that is, of the Sun, and of all the Host of Heaven.

Ver. 31. *And it came to pass, as if it had been a light thing to him to walk in the way of Jeroboam the son of Nebat;*] He was not satisfied with the Worship which *Jeroboam* had invented, though highly displeasing to God. For so the Words are in the Hebrew, *was it a light thing?* As much as to say, it was a most heinous Crime; and yet *Abab* resolved to be more wicked. For *Jeroboam* did not quite forsake the LORD God of *Israel*, but worshipped him by a Representation of his own Invention: And this more out of Policy than any Love to this kind of Worship. But *Abab*, out of pure Love to strange gods, forsook the LORD, without any such Reason for it as *Jeroboam* had; the People being now sufficiently estranged from *Jerusalem*.

*That he took to wife Jezabel the daughter of Eth-baal*] Called in profane Writers *Ithobalus*.

*King of the Zidonians,*] Who had been old Idolaters.

*And served Baal, and worshipped him.*] That God whom the Chaldeans and Babylonians called *Bel*, the Phœnicians (of whom the Zidonians were a Part) called *Baal*: Which in Hebrew signified *Lord*. Which anciently was the Name of the true God, as Mr *Selden* observes; but when the World grew wicked, was given to the Sun by the Phœnicians: Who, as *Philo Biblius* tells us, reputed the Sun to be *μὲν οὖν ἕκαστος θεός*, *The only God of Heaven*. And at last this Name was given to other Stars, and to their dead Kings, whose Memory was dear to them.

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And various Rites, Ceremonies, and Sacrifices, were devised in their Honour, as that great Man observes (*Syntag. de Diis Syris* 2. Cap. 1.) who understands these words of the Phœnician *Belus* or *Baal*, who was the very same with the European *Jupiter*: And *Zidon* being situated on the Sea, their *Baal* was called by the Greeks the *Sea Jupiter*. So *Hesychius* *Θαλάσσιος Ζεὺς ἐν Σιδόνι τιμᾶται*, the *Sea Jupiter* is worshipped at *Sidon*. But our Mr *Mede* is very confident, that the *Baal* whose Worship *Jezabel* brought with her from *Zidon*, was a deify'd King of the Phœnicians: As *Baal* was the first King of *Babel*, who was deify'd after his Death. Whence all the Souls of Men who were canonized after Death, were called *Baalim*. See *Book i. Discourse xlii.* and his *Apostacy of the latter times*, P. 1. Cap. 3. Whence it came that there were not more *Jupiters* among the Europeans, than there were *Baals* among the Syrians. And hence so many Mountains, and Springs, and Woods, and Cities, were called by the Name of *Baal*, when *Joshua* conquered *Canaan*; As *Baal-Meon*, *Bamoth-Baal*, *Baal-Gad*, *Baal-Thamar*, *Baal-Zephon*, and many more. In which Places no doubt *Baalim* were worshipped, and from thence they had their Names.

Ver. 32. *And he reared up an altar for Baal in the house of Baal, which he had built in Samaria.*] He built a Temple for this God in the Royal City; and set up an Altar, where he sacrificed to him. Which was more directly to worship other gods, than *Jeroboam* did: Who pretended the Worship he performed to the Calves, was to the true God; whom he honoured in them.

Ver. 33. *And Abab made a grove;*] Which was another Piece of Idolatry; which God commanded to be abolished, *Deut. vii. 5.*

*And Abab did more to provoke the LORD God of Israel to anger, than all the kings of Israel that were before him.*] In this Grove, it is likely, all manner of Impurities were practised: For *Jezabel* was a filthy Woman.

Ver. 34. *In his days did Hiel the Bethelite*] A Man that lived in the very Seat of Idolatry: And, it is likely, was deeply infected with it.

*Build Jericho:*] A Place which being under a *Cherem*, was never to be rebuilt; because it was devoted to God, as the first Fruits of the Conquests of *Canaan*. Which this Man either did not know, (because ignorant of the Law, which now was little read) or was so impious as not to regard the Words of *Joshua*, believing no other God but *Baal*.

*He laid the foundation thereof in Abiram his first-born, and set up the gates thereof in his youngest son Segub; according to the word of the LORD, which he spake by Joshua the son of Nun.*] But he found to his Cost, that the Sentence which *Joshua* pronounced against the Rebuilder of this City proved true; for his eldest Son died when he laid the first Stone of it: And so all the rest of his Children, one after another, as the Building advanced; 'till at last his youngest Son died, when it was finished. A most remarkable Instance of the Certainty of Divine Threatnings; and that God never forgets what he hath said, but continues also always the same. This Sentence

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being pronounced more than four hundred and forty Years ago, and now fulfilled exactly in all its Circumstances: Which might have been a Warning to the whole Nation, not to despise the long Suffering and Patience of God; who though he had not yet carried them out of their good Land, according to the Word of *Abijah*, xiv. 15. would certainly do it, if they continued in their Impenitence.

## C H A P. XVII.

Verse 1. **A**ND *Elijah the Tishbite*,] The Care of God over this People (as I noted before) was so great, that in every King's Reign, from the first to the last, there was one or more Prophets to instruct, admonish, and correct them. And now in the Reign of *Abab* (when there was the greatest need of it) God raised up an extraordinary Prophet far exceeding all others, whom *Abarbinel* calls the *Prince of the Prophets*, next unto *Moses*. Whose Original being not known (for here is no mention of his Father or Mother) some of the *Jews* have fancied him to have been an Angel sent from Heaven to reduce them to the true Religion. So *Abarbinel* relates, upon the Book of *Judges*, as *Joh. Frischmuthus* observes, in a *Dissertation* about *Elijah*. Whose Name, which in the *Hebrew* is *Elijahu*, carries something Divine in it; being compounded, *Ægid. Camartus* imagines, of three of the Names of God, viz. *Eli*, and *Jah*, and *Hu*. There is no Doubt, the two first are the Names of God, but there is Reason to question the last, though a great Man of our own, *Edm. Castellus*, in his *Polyglot Lexicon*, doth put *Hu* among the Divine Names, and so do the *Cabbalists*. He was indeed a very eminent Messenger of God, sent to call the *Israelites* to Repentance; from whence our learned Dr *Lightfoot* thinks he had the Name of *Tishbite*: From the *Hebrew* Word *Shub*, which signifies to *return*; for he was sent to be the *Converter* of the Nation. See him upon St *Luke* i. 17. Other Conjectures there are about this Name, which *Frischmuth* hath collected; and *Dionysius Petavius* hath delivered his Opinion about it, upon *Epiphanius* (*Hæres.* lv. n. 3.) who saith *Elijah* was ἐξ ἱερέων of the Priests, and Grandson to *Zadok*. But *Kimchi* seems to have given the plainest Account of this Name of *Tishbite*, from *Thesbe* a Town or Region where he was born: Just as *Abijah* is called *Shilonite*, from *Shilo*, where he was born, or dwelt.

*Who was of the inhabitants of Gilead*,] It is not certain, that he was a Native of this Country; but only that he came, and settled among the *Gileadites*; being born, as some think, in the Tribe of *Benjamin*; though most are rather of Opinion in the Tribe of *Gad*.

*Said unto Abab, As the LORD liveth, before whom I stand, there shall not be dew nor rain these years, but according to my word.*] To make his Words the more regarded, he swore solemnly by the Eternal God, whose Minister he was (for that is meant by *standing before him*) and to whom he had prayed, that there should be no Moisture from the Clouds for three Years and an half ensuing; unless it was by his Prayers.

Thus St *James* teaches us to expound these Words, *these years*: *James* v. 17. And *Abarbinel* makes out the Connection of this Chapter with the foregoing in this manner. *Elijah* admonished *Abab* to lay to Heart the Punishment of *Hiel* the *Bethelite*; saying, fear the LORD lest he be angry with thee, as he was with *Hiel*, for breaking his Command. But *Abab* despised his Admonition, and said; that was a Chance; for you say we are all Idolaters, and yet the Threatning in the Law of *Moses* (*Deut.* xi. 16, 17.) is not come upon us. Whereupon *Elijah* in a great Anger said; *as the LORD liveth there shall be no dew, &c.* Which Story is told with more Circumstances in the *Talmud*.

Ver. 2. *And the word of the LORD came to him, saying,*] The King being incensed at this Threatning, God took care to secure *Elijah* from his Fury, by the following Direction.

Ver. 3. *Get thee hence,*] For he saw that *Abab* intended to lay hold of him.

*And turn thee eastward, and hide thy self by the brook Cherith, that is before Jordan.*] This Brook *Bochartus* takes to be the same with *Kana*, mentioned by *Joshua*, xvi. 5. xvii. 9. So called from the Plenty of *Reeds* (for *Kana* signifies a *Reed*) in which the Prophet lay hid, while he stayed in this Place.

Ver. 4. *And it shall be, that thou shalt drink of the brook, and I will command the ravens to feed thee there.*] This seems so strange, that some will have the Word *Orebim* not to signify *Ravens*, but *Merchants*: Because they find the Word *Orebe* in *Ezek.* xxvii. 17. signifying *Merchants* that traded in the Market of *Tyre*. But as *Bochartus* hath observed, they are never called simply *Orebim*. Nor is their Opinion better, who think *Arabians* to be here meant: For there were none thereabout; and *Elias* his lurking-place would soon have been discovered to *Abab*, if *Merchants*, or any other People that travelled that Way, had been acquainted with it. We must therefore acknowledge a miraculous Care which God took of *Elijah*, as all the Ancients do, none excepted. See *Bochartus* in his *Hierozoicon*, P. 2. Lib. 2. Cap. xiii. Nor did such Things seem incredible to the Heathen; who tell us as strange Stories. For Example, that *Jupiter* was fed in his Cradle by Bees: And *Janus* the Son of *Apollo* and *Evadne* with Honey by Dragons: and *Midas* when an Infant, had Corn put into his Mouth, as he lay asleep, by Ants: *Æsculapius* nourished by a Goat; and a great many more mentioned by that excellent Person *Huetius* in his *Quæstiones Alnetane*, Lib. 2. Cap. xii. N. 17.

Ver. 5. *So he went, and did according to the word of the LORD: for he went and dwelt by the brook Cherith, that is before Jordan.*

Ver. 6. *And the ravens brought him bread and flesh in the morning, and bread and flesh in the evening: and he drank of the brook.*] God amply provided for his Servant; sending him not only Bread, but Flesh also, that he might make a good Meal: And this twice a Day, at Dinner and Supper. This Provision some of the *Jews* fancy (in *Gemara Sanbedrin*, Cap. xi. N. 76.) the Ravens brought from *Abab's* House; others fancy, from *Jehoshaphat's*;  
as



as if he was fed with Royal Dainties. But *Bochartus* thinks it is better to say, that they had this Provision from some of the seven thousand Persons who had never bowed to *Baal*. But it is best of all to confess we cannot tell whence they had it; God perhaps making Meat ready prepared, on purpose for him. They who object that these were unclean Creatures who polluted the Meat which they touched, should consider, that all this was done by an extraordinary Dispensation. And *St Chrysostom* fancies, there was this moral Instruction in it; that *Elijah* should learn to be more mild and gentle, toward the deluded *Israelites*; by these Birds, who were cruel to their young, but kind to him. And indeed it is very wonderful, as *Victorinus Strigellius* here glosses, that the Ravens, who do not feed their own young ones, should constantly feed the Prophet. For such is the *ασογία* of these Creatures, as Naturalists report, that they forsake their young before they be fledged: Whom God feeds by Worms, which are produced by the Dung, and out of the Carcasses that have been brought into their Nests, 'till they be able to fly, and provide for themselves. I think he hath this out of *St Ambrose*, *L. x. Epist. 82.* The *Psalmist* is thought to allude to it, *Psal. cxlvii. 9.* And God himself in *Job xxxviii. 41.*

Ver. 7. *And it came to pass after a while, that the brook dried up, because there had been no rain.*] In the *Hebrew* it is, *at the end of days*, that is, of a Year: As that Phrase, I have shewn, is often used.

Ver. 8. *And the word of the LORD came to him, saying,*

Ver. 9. *Arise, get thee to Zarephath, which belongeth to Zidon, and dwell there:]* It was a Place between *Tyre* and *Zidon*; but belonged to the Territory of the latter; and so was not in the Land of *Israel*, but inhabited by *Gentiles*.

*Behold, I have commanded a widow woman there to sustain thee.*] He had appointed and disposed her, just as he did the Ravens, *ver. 4.* For she had no Command from God for it (it appears from *ver. 12.*) and this was an extraordinary Providence, that a poor Widow, and a Gentile should support him; though in all likelihood, she was not a Stranger to the true Religion, but a pious Woman of another Nation.

Ver. 10. *So he arose, and went to Zarephath: and when he came to the gate of the city, behold, the widow woman was there gathering sticks:]* Which shews she was but in a poor Condition.

*And he called to her, and said, Fetch me, I pray thee, a little water in a vessel, that I may drink.*] For he knew, by a Divine Inspiration, this was the Woman that was to sustain him.

Ver. 11. *And as she was going to fetch it,]* This shews she was a good Woman; being ready to succour a Stranger.

*He called unto her and said, Bring me, I pray thee, a morsel of bread in thy hand.*] Which was very natural to desire, having asked for Water: But he said it to move her to acquaint him with what follows.

Ver. 12 *And she said, As the LORD thy God liveth,]* By this it appears she knew the LORD God of *Israel*; and that *Elijah* was a Prophet; or, at least, one of his Worshipers.

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*I have not a cake, but a handful of meal in a barrel, and a little oyl in a cruse: and I am gathering two sticks,]* By *two sticks* is meant a few: As *two* frequently signifies, *Isa. xvii. 6. Jerem. iii. 14.*

*That I may go, and dress it for me and my son, that we may eat it and die.]* The famine it seems was fore in that Country, as well as in *Israel*. For they of *Zidon* had their Provision from the *Israelites*; and besides, it is likely, had no Rain: But were punished as their Neighbours were; being all alike Idolaters.

Ver. 13. *And Elijah said unto her, Fear not:]* Be not afraid of being famished.

*Go, and do as thou hast said: but make me a little cake thereof first, and bring it unto me; and after that make for thee, and for thy son.]* A very hard Command: Whereby he tried her Faith and Obedience.

Ver. 14. *For thus said the LORD God of Israel, the barrel of meal shall not waste, neither shall the cruse of oyl fail, until the day that the LORD send rain on the earth.]* This was a Miracle, which they that were not Christians did not think incredible: As *Huetius* shews in the same Book, and the Chapter above mentioned, *ver. 4.*

Ver. 15. *And she went, and did according to the saying of Elijah:]* By which it is evident that she trusted in the LORD God of *Israel*.

*And she, and he, and her house did eat many days.]* Some by *many days* understood a full Year: As it is the Margin. But it rather signifies *two years*: For one year was past before he came from the Brook *Cherith*. (See *ver. 7.*) And therefore they lived upon this Meal and Oil two Years more, 'till the End of the Famine.

Ver. 16. *And the barrel of meal wasted not; neither did the cruse of oyl fail, according to the word of the LORD which he spake by Elijah.]* But what they took out for their daily Use, was immediately supplied by the Power of God.

Ver. 17. *And it came to pass after these things,]* After this Demonstration of the Power and Goodness of God,

*That the son of the woman, the mistress of the house, fell sick, and his sickness was so sore, that there was no breath left in him.]* He expired and died.

Ver. 18. *And she said unto Elijah, What have I to do with thee, O thou man of God?] Some take the Meaning to be, wherein have I offended thee? But the following Words seem to imply, that in a great Agony of Spirit she asked him wherefore he came to her House, if this were his Intention.*

*Art thou come to call my sin to remembrance, and to slay my son?] This she thought was hard, to requite his Entertainment at her House with such a Punishment for her Sins. For then Sins are said to be called to remembrance before God, when he punishes them.*

Ver. 19. *And he said unto her, Give me thy son.]* He reached out his Hands, and bid her put him into his Arms.

*And he took him out of her bosom,]* It seems he was but a little Child: Who the *Jews* think afterwards proved a Prophet, *viz. Jonah.*

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And



*And carried him up into a loft, where he abode,]* The LXX translate it ὑπερῶν, an upper Room : Which he had to himself for his Study, Meditation, and Prayer ; as *Elisha* afterwards had in another Place, 2 Kings iv. 10.

*And laid him upon his own bed.]* By this it appears it was a private Room, where he lodged.

Ver. 20. *And he cried unto the LORD,]* Prayed most earnestly.

*And said ; O LORD my God, hast thou also brought evil upon the widow, with whom I sojourn, by slaying her son ?]* He humbly expostulated with God ; Representing what an Addition it was to his other Afflictions, that this Widow should suffer, who had been so kind to him ; and suffer in her Son, the great Comfort of her Life ; and that while he was in her House.

Ver. 21. *And he stretched himself upon the child three times, and cried unto the LORD, and said, O LORD my God, I pray thee, let this child's soul come into him again.]* He lay prostrate in Prayer before God, and stretched out himself upon the Child, as if he would inspire him with a new Life. And this he did three Times ; believing God would be moved by his Importunity, to do what he desired.

Ver. 22. *And the LORD heard the voice of Elijah, and the soul of the child came into him again, and he revived.]* Hereby it appeared not only that this was done by God, to whom *Elijah* prayed ; but that he did it for *Elijah's* sake.

Ver. 23. *And Elijah took the child, and brought him down out of the chamber into the house, and delivered him unto his mother : and Elijah said, See, thy son liveth.]* There was no need, one would think, to bid her observe and lay to Heart the great Power and Mercy of God, in restoring her Son to Life. But the best of us must be awakened to our Duty.

Ver. 24. *And the woman said to Elijah, Now by this I know that thou art a man of God ;]* She believed it before, ver. 20. But when she saw he did not cure her Child when he lay sick, but suffered him to die, she began to doubt of it. But her Faith revived, together with her Son, and was mightily confirmed.

*And that the word of the LORD in thy mouth, is truth.]* She believed all that he delivered as the Mind of God ; and gave up her self intirely to his Instructions. The Benefit of which she enjoyed, 'till God sent *Elijah* to meet *Abab* ; resolving to send Rain upon the Earth, as it follows in the next Chapter.

## C H A P. XVIII.

Verse 1. *AND it came to pass after many days,]* See upon ver. 15. of the foregoing Chapter. *Grotius* expounds it *after six months*, upon St Luke iv. 25.

*That the word of the LORD came to Elijah in the third year, saying,]* Our Saviour saith, and so doth St James, that the Drought continued three Years and six Months, Luke iv. 25. James v. 17. which doth not disagree with these Words, which are thus to be explained. At the Beginning of the Drought it is likely *Abab* im-

puted the want of Rain to Natural Causes, and so did not seek to slay *Elijah* : But after six Months neither the former nor the latter Rain falling in their Season, he began to be enraged at him as the Cause of the Drought : Which forced *Elijah*, at God's Command, to save his Life by Flight. And from that Time the three Years here mentioned are to be computed ; before the Word of the LORD came to him : He being one Year at the Brook *Cherith*, and two Years at *Sarepta* ; in the End of which Year God took pity upon the Country, having fulfilled the Words of *Elijah*, xvii. 1. I see no Ground for *Abarbinel's* Observation, that the Famine continued three Years, to shew that it was a Punishment inflicted for the Sins of three Families : *Jeroboam* the Son of *Nebai*, and his Son *Nadab* ; *Baasha*, and his Son *Elah* ; *Omri*, and his Son *Abab*. The Observation of *Grotius* is far better upon St Luke iv. 25. See there.

*Go shew thy self unto Abab ; and I will send rain upon the earth.]* He would not destroy the Earth because it was inhabited by wicked Men (as *Abarbinel* speaks) and yet would have them know that *Elijah's* Prayers procured Mercy for them.

Ver. 2. *And Elijah went to shew himself unto Abab : and there was a sore famine in Samaria.]* Which made it the more dangerous for him to appear in *Abab's* Presence : Left being so sorely afflicted, he should in his Rage cause him to be killed, before he could deliver his Message to him.

Ver. 3. *And Abab called Obadiab which was the governour of his house :]* Some, both Jews and Christians, think this was *Obadiab* the Prophet : For which I can find no Ground, but what is said in 2 Chron. xvii. 7. that *Obadiab* was one of the Princes whom *Jehoshaphat* sent to instruct the People. And *Ezra* from the next Words infers he was not a Prophet.

*(Now Obadiab feared the LORD greatly :]* Was a truly religious Man, and worshipped the LORD alone with great Affection to his Service : Which one would have expected should have made *Abab* discard him, if not persecute him. But, I suppose, he was so very useful a Servant to him, in the Management of the affairs of his Family (which he ordered with singular Prudence and Fidelity) that he connived at his not worshipping *Baal*, nor the Calves. Especially since he did not (we may well think) go up to *Jerusalem* to worship ; with which Defect God was pleased to dispense, as *Abab* did with his Religion.

Ver. 4. *For it was so, when Jezebel cut off the prophets of the LORD,]* There were Schools of the Prophets, it is likely, still remaining in *Israel*, unto her Time ; but she endeavoured to destroy them, and those who were bred up in them ; that there might be none to instruct the People in the true Religion. For such, I suppose, are here meant ; not those that were indued with the extraordinary Gift of Prophecy ; for *Elijah* saith, ver. 22. that he only was left a Prophet of the LORD ; though that may signify no more, but that he knew of no body beside.

That



*That Obadiab took an hundred prophets, and hid them by fifty in a cave,]* Which was an Act of great Piety and Zeal; whereby he hazarded his own Life.

*And fed them with bread and water.)]* Sent them Meat and Drink privately every Day.

Ver. 5. *And Abab said unto Obadiab, Go into the land, unto all fountains of water, and unto all brooks: peradventure we may find grafs to save the horses and mules alive, that we lose not all the beasts.]* Many were dead for want of Grafs, which he hoped they might find growing in such moist Places, enough to preserve the rest.

Ver. 6. *So they divided the land between them, to pass throughout it: Abab went one way by himself, and Obadiab went another way by himself.]* Abab would make this Search himself, lest it should not be done faithfully by others; who might be persuaded by Prayers and Intreaties, or the Presents of those who had any Grafs, not to discover it. Only he trusted Obadiab.

Ver. 7. *And as Obadiab was in the way, behold, Elijah met him: and he knew him, and fell on his face, and said, Art thou my lord Elijah?]* He shewed by the profound Reverence he made to him, how much he honoured him.

Ver. 8. *And he answered him, I am: Go tell thy lord, Behold, Elijah is here.]* The Prophet also approved the Honour Obadiab did his Master, whom he owned for his lord, though he was a very wicked Man. (See ver. 10.) For Kings, by their Office, are sacred Persons; and therefore are to be had in great Veneration (tho' bad Men) even by the High Priest, and by the Prophets, who did not approach them, as the Jews observe, without due Reverence. And it is a famous Saying of R. Jedaiah, *Do not dwell in a City, where no Reverence or Fear is paid to the King.*

Ver. 9. *And he said, What have I sinned, that thou wouldest deliver thy servant into the hand of Abab, to slay me?]* For that he concluded would be the Effect of such a Message delivered by him to Abab, as he shews in the following Discourse.

Ver. 10. *As the LORD thy God liveth, there is no nation or kingdom, whither my lord hath not sent to seek thee:]* That is, to all the Countries thereabouts, with whom he was in League. For it is a very foolish Conceit of some of the Jews, (which the best of them disown) that Abab was as great an Emperor as Nebuchadnezzar, or Ahasuerus, who ruled over all Nations.

*And when they said, He is not there, he took an oath of the kingdom and nation, that they found thee not.]* These Words incline me to think, that he sought him only throughout all his own Dominions; through every Tribe, which is called a Nation; and every Government, which is called a Kingdom. For how could he take an Oath of any but his own Subjects? It may be said indeed, that there might be such Compacts between him and the Moabites, Edomites, Ammonites, and other Neighbouring Nations, that they should harbour none of his rebellious Subjects: And that if he required it, they should swear they knew of none in their Country. But such a Treaty is so unusual, that I see no Reason to suppose it.

Ver. 11. *And now thou sayest, go tell thy lord, Behold, Elijah is here.*

Ver. 12. *And it shall come to pass, as soon as I am gone from thee, that the spirit of the LORD shall carry thee whither I know not:]* Snatch thee away from hence, as sometimes the Prophets were suddenly transported by an invifible Power to Places far distant from that where they were at present, 2 Kings ii. 16. Ezek. iii. 12, 14. Acts viii. 39, 40. And, in all likelihood, there had been Instances of it before this Time; which made Obadiab fear, it might fall out so in this Case.

*And so when I come and tell Abab, and he cannot find thee, he shall slay me:]* Because he did not seize and secure Elijah when he was in his Power; but let him escape.

*But I thy servant fear the LORD from my youth.]* Therefore he hoped the Prophet would take Care to preserve him, because he was not like the rest of the Court.

Ver. 13. *Was it not told my lord, what I did when Jezebel slew the prophets of the LORD? how I hid an hundred men of the LORDs prophets by fifty in a cave, and fed them with bread and water?]* Sometimes a virtuous Man may speak the Truth of himself; though it be in his own Praise.

Ver. 14. *And now thou sayest, Go tell thy lord, Behold, Elijah is here: and he shall slay me.]* When it would expose him to manifest Danger of losing his Life.

Ver. 15. *And Elijah said, As the LORD of hosts liveth,]* He who commands all Creatures in Heaven and Earth.

*Before whom I stand,]* Whom I serve, as one of his Ministers.

*I will surely shew my self unto him to day.]* He feared not to shew himself to Abab; for a greater King than he, the LORD of all things, he knew would preserve him.

Ver. 16. *So Obadiab went to meet Abab and told him: and Abab went to meet Elijah.]* The solemn Oath of Elijah made Obadiab readily obey him; and assured him Abab should not be disappointed, but certainly find him.

Ver. 17. *And it came to pass, when Abab saw Elijah, that Abab said unto him, Art thou he that troubleth Israel?]* He troubles a Country, who confounds all Things in it, and puts them out of Order. In such a Condition Israel now was, by a grievous Famine; which made them not know which way to turn themselves. And this he ascribed to Elijah.

Ver. 18. *And he answered, I have not troubled Israel, but thou and thy fathers house, in that ye have forsaken the commandments of the LORD,]* They trouble a Nation, who break the Laws of God; not they that defend them.

*And thou hast followed Baalim.]* There were more Baals than one worshipped by the Heathen, as I observed before: And it is very probable, that Abab worshipped all the Host of Heaven, as well as the Sun. See xvi. 30, 31.

Ver. 19. *Now therefore send, and gather to me all Israel unto mount Carmel,]* That he might prove, in the Face of all the People, that it was not he who troubled them.



*And the prophets of Baal four hundred and fifty, and the prophets of the groves four hundred,]* By the prophets of the groves (as we translate it) Mr Selden understands the Prophets of *Astarte*, the great Goddess of the *Zidonians*; which he proves by comparing many Places of Scripture together, *L. de Diis Syris Syntag. 2. Cap. 3.* *Maimonides* hath a peculiar Notion, that the Prophets of *Baal*, and of the *Groves*, were such as had drunk in the Opinion of the ancient *Zabii*; who made Images to receive the Influences of the Stars; Golden ones for the Sun, and Silver ones for the Moon, &c. which gave to Men the Gift of Prophecy, and shewed what was good for them. The same they said of Trees; which were some under the Influence of one Star, some under the Influence of another; and were planted in their Names, and worshipped after several Manners, and infused special Virtues into the Trees, and made Men Prophets. This he avers he found expressly in their Books. *More Nevochim, Pars iii. Cap. 29.*

*Who eat at Jezebel's table.]* So high an Esteem they had of these Prophets, that she kept a Table on purpose for them, to do them Honour with the People.

Ver. 20. *So Ahab sent unto all the children of Israel, and gathered the prophets together unto mount Carmel.]* I suppose the *Israelites* sent the great Men of their several Tribes to represent them; and the Prophets readily assembled at the King's Command; who did not distrust their Power, and was promised Rain, I suppose, by *Elijah*, if he did as he desired.

Ver. 21. *And Elijah came to all the people, and said, How long halt ye between two opinions?]* Like lame Men, who tread not firmly, but dubiously; not knowing which to choose, the LORD or *Baal*; and therefore joining both together.

*If the LORD be God, follow him: If Baal be God, follow him.]* As much as to say, there cannot be more Gods than one. That's the first Article of your Faith, *Hear, O Israel, the LORD our God is one LORD, Deut. vi. 4.* If the LORD be he, then stick to him: If *Baal*, then reject the other. This is most rational: For both of them cannot be God.

*And the people answered him not a word.]* Either not knowing what to resolve; or being ashamed.

Ver. 22. *Then said Elijah unto the people, I, even I only remain a prophet of the LORD; but the prophets of Baal are four hundred and fifty Men.]* He was the only Prophet that appeared in behalf of the LORD, and yet feared not to contest with a great Multitude, who came to defend *Baal*.

Ver. 23. *Let them therefore give us two bullocks, and let them choose one bullock for themselves, and cut it in pieces, and lay it on wood, and put no fire under: and I will dress the other bullock, and lay it on wood, and put no fire under:]* He propounded a plain Way to decide this Controversy, and settle the Peoples Minds in their Belief. To whom he first propounded it, that they might approve of it, if they thought it a sure Way to discover the Truth.

Ver. 24. *And call ye on the name of your gods, and I will call on the name of the LORD: and the God that answereth by fire, let him be God.]* That is, he that sendeth Fire to consume the Sacrifice, which is presented to him.

*And the people answered and said, It is well spoken.]* They looked upon this as a reasonable Proposition; because they knew that Sacrifices had been approved by God, in this manner; and they were very desirous to make the Experiment, and be satisfied, by this Means, who was the true God. Thus *Moses* his Sacrifice was approved, *Levit. xx. 24.* and *Gideon's*, *Judges vi. 21.* and *David's*, *1 Chron. xxi. 20.* and *Solomon's*, when he consecrated the Temple, *2 Chron. vii. 1, 3.* By this Means, in all these Cases, God hath shewn that he accepted the Sacrifices, and that the Persons who offered them were his Servants.

Ver. 25. *And Elijah said unto the prophets of Baal,]* Having the Peoples Approbation, he turned to *Baal's* Prophets, and desired them to agree to this Trial.

*Choose you, one bullock for your selves, and dress it first;]* No doubt they produced both the Bullocks, as he propounded at the first, ver. 22. and if there was any Advantage in choosing one, and dressing it before the other, he desired they might have it.

*For ye are many:]* And he being a single Person, was willing to give them the Precedence.

*And call on the name of your gods, but put no fire under.]* It may be translated, call on the Name of your god, viz. *Baal*. Or else, it may relate to their *Baalim*, which were many, as they themselves were: And desire them all to try their Power, by putting no Fire under the Sacrifice; but expecting it to come down from Heaven.

Ver. 26. *And they took the bullock which was given them,]* The Choice of which was left to them.

*And dressed it.]* Flead it, and cut it in Pieces, and laid it upon the Wood. Which they durst not refuse to do, because the People thought it a reasonable Motion which *Elijah* made; and they had utterly lost their Credit with the People, if they had not accepted it. And perhaps they did not distrust the Power of *Baal*; which *Rabag* thinks was *Mars*, a fiery Planet; but rather the *Sun*, which far exceeds all the other Heavenly Bodies in Heat. Which they thought might possibly exert its Power, upon this great Occasion, and burn up their Sacrifice. At least they might hope that *Elijah* might not be able to bring Fire down from Heaven, because he sacrificed in a High Place not at the Temple: Which was contrary to the Law of God, who therefore would not hear him; and then they should stand upon equal Ground with him, though they obtained no Fire to consume their Sacrifice.

*And called upon the name of Baal, from morning even until noon,]* When the Sun was in its greatest Strength.

*Saying, O Baal here us. But there was no voice, nor any that answered.]* Not the least Flash of Fire.

And



*And they leaped upon the altar which was made.]* Or, they danced about it, after the manner of the ancient *Salii*. Or, as *Bochartus* interprets it, *Quasi furore Prophetico extra se rapti, incompōitis motibus huc illuc ferebantur.* They ran about hither and thither, as Men in an Ecstasy with a Prophetical Fury, which put them into uncouth and disorderly Motions. For it appears they acted like Prophets from *ver. 29.* who sometimes acted as Men beside themselves. *Hierozoicon*, P. 1. Lib. II. Cap. 50. *Abarbinel* thinks this Leaping or Dancing was a Rite used in the Worship of the Sun: Which puts all Things in Motion.

*Ver. 17. And it came to pass at noon,]* When the Morning Sacrifice was ended.

*That Elijah mocked them,]* He did not think it unlawful, or unseemly to jeer them, and their God; that he might awaken them out of their Stupidity, and expose them to all the By-standers as Corrupters of Religion, and Deceivers of the People.

*Cry aloud: for he is a god,]* He bid them raise their Voices; for they believed he was a God, but might be something deaf, or or a great Way off from them, and so could not hear what they said, unless they cried louder.

*Either he is talking,]* Busy about Dispatches: Either in sending Ambassadors, or giving Audience.

*Or he his pursuing,]* Some Notion (as the *Hebrews* understand it) being in a deep Study, or deliberating about some weighty Business. It is commonly understood, he is hunting, or pursuing Enemies.

*Or he is in a journey,]* Not at Home; but travelling to some other Place; whither they must send after him.

*Or peradventure he slepeth,]* As they used to do in those hot Countries after Dinner.

*And must be awaked.]* With loud Noises.

*Ver. 28. And they cried aloud, and cut themselves after their manner, with knives and lancers, 'till the blood gushed out upon them.]* They did more than *Elijah* bad them: Hoping to move him with their own Blood, in which, perhaps, they thought he more delighted, than in the Blood of Beasts, or in their Cries. For many Nations offered human Sacrifices to their Gods: And their Priests, when they were possessed with a sacred Fury, were wont to slash themselves 'till their Blood gushed out. Thus among the *Romans* the Priests did in the Worship of *Bellona*: In which *Sacerdotes non alieno, sed suo cruore sacrificant*, &c. The Priests sacrificed not with another's Blood, but with their own. (See *Laëtantius* in his *Divin. Institut.* Lib. I. Cap. 21.) For cutting their Shoulders, and running their drawn Swords through both Hands, they run about like mad Men. And so *Apuleius* saith, they that carried about the *Syrian Goddess*, after many other Things, took out their Knives as Swords and cut themselves. See *Lib. viii. Metamorph.* p. 172, 173. and *Pricæus* and *Rigaltius* upon that Place. But our Mr *Mede* hath a peculiar Notion, which is, that *Baalim* being the deified Souls of dead Men, therefore the Prophets of *Baal* cut themselves in his Worship; because this was a Funeral Rite or Ceremony,

*Levit. xix. 28. xxi. 5. Deut. xiv. 1.* and therefore retained in the Service of such Gods, in Token that they were but deified Men. See upon *xvi. 31.*

*Ver. 29. And it came to pass, when mid-day was past, and they prophesied to the time of the offering the evening sacrifice;]* When all was done, they fell into a Fury, and raved, as if they were possessed with an invisible Power; singing Hymns and Praises to *Baal*. For that is sometimes meant by *prophesying*, *1 Chron. xxv. 2, 3.* or, it may be simply meant, they still continued praying to *Baal* (*ver. 26.*) for that was Part of a Prophet's Office

*That there was neither voice, nor any to answer, nor any that regarded.]* No more Tokens of Regard to their Praises than to their Prayers; nor any, the least Intimation, that *Baal* was a God, that minded what they said, or did

*Ver. 30. And Elijah said unto all the people, Come near unto me. And they came near unto him:]* They had stood hitherto by the Prophets of *Baal*, to attend them in their Sacrifice. Now *Elijah* calls them to him, that they might be Witnesses of what he could do.

*And he repaired the altar of the L O R D that was broken down.]* I suppose *Carmel* had been one of the most eminent high Places in the whole Kingdom: Where the People, as they had been long accustomed, offered Sacrifices to God in ancient Times. But the Worshippers of *Baal* had broken down the Altar, and set up one of their own. For there were two Sorts of High Places, I have before noted, some for the Worship of the true God, which continued in *Judah*, even under religious Princes: Others for the Worship of Idols; which good Kings took away, when they let the other remain. On the contrary, *Abab* broke down the Altars of God in the high Places, and allowed none but these for *Baal*.

*Ver. 31. And Elijah took twelve stones, according to the number of the tribes of the sons of Jacob,]* That he might shew he worshipped the God of the Patriarchs, and no other: And that all the People, though divided in Civil Government, ought to be united in the same Religion, and have but one Altar for them; being the Sons of one Man, who was very dear to God, as it here follows.

*Unto whom the word of the L O R D came, saying, Israel shall be thy name.]* He purged his Family from all Idolatry; and then God appeared to him, and talked with him, and called him by a new Name; importing the Power he had with God, *Gen. xxxv. 2, 3, 4, 10, 13, 15.*

*Ver. 32. And with the stones he built an altar in the name of the L O R D:]* Which he might do, being a Prophet; for such Persons were free from the lesser Laws, that they might preserve the greater.

*And he made a trench about the altar, as great as would contain two measures of seed.]* That is, a large Trench; for two Measures are thought to be the third Part of an *Ephab*.

*Ver. 33. And he put the wood in order, and cut the bullock in pieces, and laid him on the wood,]* To be a whole Burnt-offering.

*And*



*And said, Fill four barrels with water,]* Which they might have out of the Brook at the Foot of the Mount (*ver. 40.*) or out of the Sea, which was not far off.

*And pour it on the burnt-sacrifice, and on the wood.]* From hence some gather, the Altar was hollow into which this Water run.

*Ver. 34. And he said, Do it the second time : and they did it the second time. And he said, Do it the third time : And they did it the third time.]* That is, they did it 'till all was full of Water, as it follows in the next Verse.

*Ver. 35. And the water run round about the altar, and he filled the trench also with water.]* This seems to prove the altar was hollow, and that there was a Trench also round about it : Both which were as full of Water, as they could hold, to make the Miracle more conspicuous and convincing. For what more contrary than Fire and Water ?

*Ver. 36. And it came to pass, at the time of the offering of the evening sacrifice,]* When the People of God were offering their solemn Prayers to God at the Temple in *Jerusalem*. This is a noted Time for great Things that were then done. See upon *Levit. ix. 24.*

*That Elijah the prophet came near,]* To the Altar.

*And said, LORD God of Abraham, and Isaac and Jacob, let it be known this day, that thou art God in Israel ; and that I am thy servant, and that I have done all these things at thy word.]* He desires him to demonstrate at once by this Miracle, that he was the only true God, and that *Elijah* was his Prophet, and that he had done nothing (in bringing, for Instance, a long Famine upon them) but by his Command. Such Miracles were proper, either where a new Religion was to be set up, or the old one restored after a general Depravation.

*Ver. 37. Hear me, O LORD, hear me,]* He was the more earnest, and fervent in his Prayer, as *Abarbinel* thinks, because he had undertaken to make this Experiment of God's Power, without any particular Command from God of his own Accord ; nothing doubting but he would appear to vindicate his own Honour ; though he offered Sacrifice in an High Place, which was against the Law.

*That this people may know that thou art the LORD God, and that thou hast turned their heart back again.]* God turns Mens Hearts, though they be not turned ; because he not only doth that which evidently tends to convert them, and is sufficient to do it ; but for the present also so affects them that they are converted : Though they will not take care to continue in that pious Bent, but start back again from him.

*Ver. 38. And the fire of the LORD fell, and consumed the burnt-sacrifice, and the wood, and the stones, and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench.]* It is called the Fire of the LORD, because it was sent from him out of Heaven to testify that he was the only God (as the People could not but acknowledge) and it was of such unusual Force, that it consumed not only the Flesh of the Bullock and the Wood, but the very Stones, and the Dust, and all the Water that had been poured out there in great Quantity.

*Ver. 39. And when all the people saw it, they fell on their faces :]* Worshipping the LORD of Heaven and Earth.

*And, said, The LORD is God ; the LORD he is God.]* This repeated Acknowledgment shews how deeply they were affected at present, with the Demonstration God had given, that he only was to be worshipped. Which extorted this publick Confession from them : But they soon forgot their own Convictions, and continued in their Idolatry.

*Ver. 40. And Elijah said unto them, Take the prophets of Baal, let none of them escape :]* The Prophets of the Groves, I suppose, were not there : *Jezabel*, on whom they attended (*ver. 19.*) not suffering them to appear. It is likely they were *Zidonians*, which she brought along with her from her own Country, when *Abab* married her, and were peculiarly under her Command.

*And they took them, and Elijah brought them down to the brook Kishon, and slew them there.]* As Perversers of the Law, and Teachers of Idolatry ; upon whom the People, in that Fit of Zeal wherein they now were, readily executed the Sentence *Elijah* pronounced against them. And *Abab* could make no Opposition ; being himself also, it is likely, astonished at the stupendious Miracle.

*Ver. 41. And Elijah said unto Abab, Get thee up, eat and drink,]* They had fasted and prayed all the Day 'till the Even Sacrifice was over, that they might have Rain ; or, that God would decide the Controversy in Question.

*For there is a sound of abundance of rain.]* He bid him be solicitous no longer ; for Plenty of Rain was coming.

*Ver. 42. And Abab went up to eat and drink,]* From the River that was at the Bottom of the Mount, he went up to a Place on the side of it, where a Tent was pitched for him, that he might refresh himself, now that the Sacrifice was finished ; and by *Elijah's* Prayer he obtained Rain, which he assured him he heard coming. By these two Verses it is apparent, that *Abab* himself was present to see how this Contest between his Prophets and *Elijah*, that is, between *Baal* and God, would end. And in all Probability was as much convinced as the People, that the LORD was the only God.

*And Elijah went up to the top of Carmel ;]* The Prophet went a great deal higher, where he could see the Mediterranean Sea ; and would neither eat nor drink, till he actually saw the Rain gathering.

*And he cast himself down upon the earth, and put his face between his knees,]* He fell upon his Knees, and bowed his Head to the very Ground ; so that it touched his Knees : In Token of great Humility, and most earnest Desire, that God would remember his People, and send them Rain.

*Ver. 43. And he said to his servant,]* Who some of the *Jews* say was the Widow of *Sarepta's* Son. But he was too young to wait upon him.

*Go up now, and look towards the sea. And he went up, and looked, and said, There is nothing. And he said, go again seven times.]* It is not easy to  
I give



give an Account of these Phrases, so often here used, *he went up*. First *Abab* went up, and then *Elijah*, and now he sends his Servant, and at last he bid his Servant (*ver. 44.*) go up to *Abab*. It is most likely there were several Ridges in this Mountain, some higher than others. *Elijah* went to the Top of them; but there was another higher, to which he bid his Servant go up. Or, *Elijah* perhaps was near the Top; and he sent his Servant to the very Top of all: And then bid him go down from thence, and go up to that Part of the Mount, where *Abab* was eating and drinking.

*Ver. 44. And it came to pass, that at the seventh time there arose a little cloud out of the sea, like a mans hand: and he said, Go up and say to Abab, prepare thy chariot, and get thee down, that the rain stop thee not.*] For he saw such abundance of Rain coming, as would cause Floods, and render the Way, for the present, unpassable, if he did not make haste home.

*Ver. 45. And it came to pass in the mean while, that the heavens were thick with clouds and wind, and there was a great rain,*] While the Servant went to *Abab*, and his Chariot was making ready, that little Cloud spread it self, and in a great Thickness covered the Face of the Sky.

*And Abab rode and went to Jezreel.*] He did not go to *Samaria*; for *Jezreel*, I suppose, was nearer: And there he had a Palace, *xxi. 1.*

*Ver. 46. And the hand of the LORD was upon Elijah, and he girded up his loins, and ran before Abab,*] They wore loose and long Garments in this Country: And therefore girded them up when they had Occasion to run; that they might not hinder them. And God now gave *Elijah* more than human Strength, so that (though he was an old Man, *xix. 4.*) he was made able to run, as fast as *Abab's* Chariot drove, like one of his Footmen. In which he shewed his Readiness to do the King all the Honour imaginable, and that he was far from being his Enemy; but only desired he would become a Worshipper of the true God; which was, he could not but see, the LORD God of *Israel*.

*Unto the entrance of Jezreel.*] He thought it not prudent, it is likely, to venture into the City, lest *Jezebel* should seize him; but stopt at the Gate of the City, or of the Palace, and retired to some private Place.

C H A P. XIX.

Verse 1. **A**ND *Abab* told *Jezebel* all that *Elijah* had done.] How he had called for Fire from Heaven; and had made Rain to fall upon the Earth.

*And withal that he had slain all the prophets with the sword.*] That is, all the Prophets of *Baal*, for they only are mentioned, *xviii. 22, 25.* and the Prophets of the Groves (who are said to be four hundred, *xviii. 19.*) were still in being, as appears from *xxii. 6.*

V O L. II.

*Ver. 2. Then Jezebel sent a messenger unto Elijah, saying, So let God do to me and more also, if I make not thy life, as the life of one of them, by to morrow about this time.*] This shews the great Folly of Rage; which gave him Notice of his Danger, and admonished him to avoid it: Or, perhaps she thought him as courageous as she was furious; and that he would not flee; and then she knew her Power would be greater than his.

*Ver. 3. And when he saw that, he arose, and went for his life, and came to Beersheba which belongeth to Judah,*] Whither her Power did not reach; being in another Kingdom.

*And he left his servant there.*] Because he intended to go into the Wilderness, where he resolved to spend the rest of his Days, and die; and he would not have the Youth put to the same Straits, in which he was like to be. We read of no Command from God to fly; nor doth he forbid it; but left him to his own Prudence. Which made him think it in vain to hope for *Abab's* Protection; who he saw would continue an Idolater, and by his Example make the People revolt to the Worship of *Baal*. Though some are of Opinion, it was a Fault in *Elijah* to run away, and not to depend upon God to preserve him, in his pious Endeavours to keep the People in the true Religion; who had so solemnly acknowledged the LORD to be God.

*Ver. 4. And he himself went a days journey into the wilderness,*] This Wilderness was that wherein the *Israelites* wandred forty Years; and he now travelled as many Days.

*And came and sat down under a juniper-tree,*] Which some look upon as a Sign he did not value Life; because the Shade of this Tree (under which he not only sat, but lay down and slept) is thought to be very noxious, as *Virgil* observes.

*And he requested for himself that he might die, and said, It is enough; now, O LORD, take away my life.*] He thought he could do God no further Service; and therefore desired to be discharged from his Office by Death; for all that he could say or do, proved ineffectual.

*For I am not better than my fathers.*] Unto whose Age, it is likely, he had lived.

*Ver. 5. And as he laid and slept under the juniper-tree, an angel touched him, and said unto him, Arise and eat.*] Perhaps he was faint with his Day's Journey, for want of Food at the End of it.

*Ver. 6. And he looked, and behold there was a cake baked on the coals,*] It should be translated upon hot stones, as *Bochartus* shews in his *Hiero-zoicon*, P. 1. Lib. 2. Cap. 33.

*And a cruse of water at his head, and he did eat and drink, and laid him down again.*] Being weary, and wanting Rest.

*Ver. 7. And the angel of the LORD came again the second time, and touched him, saying, Arise and eat, because the journey is too great for thee.*] Without extraordinary Strength; he being an old Man, and much tired with one Day's Journey.

*Ver. 8. And he arose, and did eat and drink, and went in the strength of that meat forty days*

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and



*and forty nights; unto Horeb the mount of God.]* It was a Journey of not above four or five Days, if so much; but he went about by private Ways, that he might not be discovered; and perhaps rested sometimes; and lay hid, if there was any Danger of his being seen. The *Jews* have made a Comparison between him and *Moses*, in twenty-four Particulars. But *Abarbinel* shews they were very different, and *Moses* had the Superiority, especially in this thing here mentioned. For he is of Opinion that *Elijah* eat and drank every Day, when he could meet with Food, as he might in several Places of the Wilderness. But ordinary Food would not have enabled him to travel so long as he did; But it was by the Power of that celestial Food which the Angel brought him, that he held out, it giving him Vigour beyond all that he could receive from any other Nourishment. But in this *Moses* went beyond him, that he had no Food at all; being supported by a miraculous Power, forty Days and forty Nights, without any Sustenance of Meat and Drink.

Ver. 9. *And he came thither into a cave, and lodged there; and behold the word of the LORD came to him, and said to him, What dost thou here, Elijah?* As much as to say, I have no Business for thee here. This is not a Place wherein to do me Service. Which was a secret Reproof for flying so far away: *Judea*, *Samaria*, or *Damascus*, being fitter Places for him to be employed in.

Ver. 10. *And he said, I have been very jealous for the LORD God of hosts:]* He professed that he had not wanted Zeal for the LORD's Service; but been moved with great Indignation against Idolatry.

*For the children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, and thrown down thine altars,]* He calls the Altars that had been erected in high Places by the ancient Patriarchs, or other pious People in following Times, God's Altars: Because they sacrificed upon them to him alone, and not to Idols.

*And slain thy prophets with the sword;]* So *Jezebel* had done, xviii. 4.

*And I, even I only am left,]* There were many Prophets besides him; but none of them appeared publicly in Defence of Religion, but he alone.

*And they seek my life to take it away,]* These Words answer the Question, *What dost thou here?* He fled thither to save his Life.

Ver. 11. *And he said, Go forth, and stand upon the mount before the LORD,]* Where the SCHECHINAH, I suppose, appeared unto him, after some Preparations for it.

*And behold, the LORD passed by, and a great and strong wind rent the mountains, and brake in pieces the rocks]* He heard a Sign of the Divine Presence coming, before he went out of the Cave. For his Angelical Ministers which attended his Majesty, passed by the Mouth of the Cave in a mighty terrible Wind; which had those dreadful Effects here mentioned.

*Before the LORD;]* These Words shew, that in exact speaking it was not the LORD that passed by when this Wind blew, but his Ushers,

as I may call them; who went before the LORD: So it here follows.

*But the LORD was not in the wind:]* The SCHECHINAH did not yet appear.

*And after the wind an earthquake; but the LORD was not in the earthquake:]* The Divine Presence still did not manifest it self.

Ver. 12. *And after the earthquake a fire;]* Lightning and Thunder, just as there was at the giving of the Law; which *Elijah* endeavoured to restore.

*But the LORD was not in the fire:]* Still he heard nothing from God; who by these things prepared him to receive his Majesty with the greatest Humility and Composure of Spirit.

*And after the fire a small still voice.]* At the last the LORD himself came; as he perceived by the whispering of a Voice; which bad him listen and attend to what the LORD should say unto him. There are many pious Meditations, which this Appearance of the Divine Majesty hath suggested to Interpreters. Particularly *Strigelius* looks upon it, as representing the Divine Nature to be inclined not to terrify and destroy; but placidly to invite and preserve. God easily lays aside his Anger (as *Nazianzen* speaks in his Oration upon his Father) and delights to exercise Mercy. For he is compelled to Anger by us, *αὐτὸς δὲ τὸ τὴν ὀργὴν ἔχει*, but to Mercy he is very prone, as we may speak, and by his own Nature bent unto it, *ἔσθ*. To the same Purpose *Rabag* discourses among the *Jews*. Others look upon all this as a Figure of the Gospel Dispensation, which came not in such a terrible manner as the Law did, with Storms, Thunders, Lightnings, and Earthquakes, (*Exod.* xix. 16. *Hebr.* xii. 18, &c.) but with great Lenity and Sweetness, God speaking to us by his Son, in the most mild and gentle manner. And herein also some think he intended to shew *Elijah* that he had all the Elements ready armed at his Command, if he pleased to make use of them, to destroy Idolaters: But by that still Voice he declared the Divine Patience and Tenderness, which he would have him to imitate, by bridling his Anger to which he was by Nature very prone.

Ver. 13. *And it was so, when Elijah heard it, that he wrapped his face in his mantle, and went out, and stood in the entrance of the cave:]* He first covered his Face, in token of great Reverence to God; not being able to look upon the Divine Glory, which now appeared; and then went out of the Cave (as God had commanded him, ver. 11.) and stood in the Entrance of it, to listen what God would say to him.

*And behold, there came a voice to him,]* From the SCHECHINAH, or Divine Glory.

*And said, What dost thou here, Elijah?]* The same Words are repeated which he had heard before, ver. 9. Only there they were spoken by the Angel; but here by the LORD himself.

Ver. 14. *And he said, I have been very jealous for the LORD of hosts: because the children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword; and I, even I only am left, and they seek my life, to take it away.]* He makes the same Answer that he had done before, ver. 10. He was so full



full of Anger (as *Rablag* thinks) that he did not apply his Mind as he ought to understand the Vision; and therefore only repeats his former Words. But God informs him in the following Verse, that he would take care to chastise the *Israelites* in due Time, for their Apostacy from him; and for that End bad him go and anoint *Hazael*, &c.

Ver. 15. *And the LORD said unto him, Go return thy way to the wilderness of Damascus:]* He bids him return the Way he came to *Hebor*; 'till he came to the Way that led to the Wilderness of *Damascus*, and go thither.

*And when thou comest, anoint Hazael to be king of Syria.]* As much as to say (as the fore-named Author expounds it) since thou art so angry with the *Israelites* for their Impiety, go and anoint one to be King of *Syria*, who shall be a Scourge to them. But this was not done presently, nor did he himself anoint *Jehu*: But ordered that it should be done by his Successor *Elisha*: Though it may be doubted whether any of them were anointed, except *Jehu*. For the Word *anoint* may be no more than appoint him King, as Kings were constituted in *Israel* by Unction. Hence by a Metaphor it is accommodated to the Preferment of Men to all Dignities. As in *Psal. cv. 15.* touch not mine anointed: And *Cyrus* is called the LORD's anointed, *Isa. xlv. 1.*

Ver. 16. *And Jehu the son of Nimshi]* He was Grandson of *Nimshi* (as appears from 2 *Kings ix. 2.*) who are frequently called Sons in the Holy Books.

*Anoint to be king over Israel: and Elisha the son of Shaphat of Abel-meholah, shalt thou anoint to be prophet in thy room.]* This last was the chiefest Command (to anoint, that is appoint, *Elisha* to be his Successor) for the other two were to be performed by him, not by *Elijah*: Who ordered *Elisha* to do it, in convenient Time: And first he appointed *Jehu* King, and afterwards *Hazael*.

Ver. 17. *And it shall come to pass, that him that escapeth the sword of Hazael, shall Jehu slay: and him that escapeth from the sword of Jehu, shall Elisha slay.]* This is not to be understood, as if the Sword of *Hazael* should do Execution before the Sword of *Jehu*, and the Sword of *Jehu*, before that of *Elisha*: But it only signifies, as *Abarbinel* observes, that God in his Providence had appointed three Persons to punish the *Israelites* according to their Deserts. Thus he intended *Hazael* should destroy them in Battle; which he mentions first, because it is a general Calamity. But *Jezabel*, and the Children of *Ahab*, and the Priests of *Baal*, not going out to fight, and consequently not falling in Battle, God ordered *Jehu* should cut them off in that manner as he did, with all the Worshipers of *Baal*. But he did not inflict Evil upon all the People of *Israel*, because he was to be their King. And though he slew Idolaters, he did not meddle with little Children, whose Disposition he did not know: But they were reserved to be punished by *Elisha*, who foresaw they would prove Idolaters. Thus he, with too much Subtilty. But in general he saith well; that the Scripture doth

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not mention these things according to the Time wherein they fell out; but according to the Decree of God, who appointed every one to execute that which was proper for him to do.

Ver. 18. *Yet I have left me seven thousand in Israel,]* This seems to be a Correction of *Elijah's* Mistake, who imagined that he alone was the only true Worshipper of God that remained in *Israel*. Though *Abarbinel* will have it relate to what goes immediately before; that all the *Israelites* should not be destroyed: For he had a great Number (*seven thousand* being put indefinitely for many thousand) of pious People in *Israel*, who had never worshipped *Baal*; and should not therefore be hurt either by *Hazael*, or otherways.

*All the knees that have not bowed to Baal, and every mouth that hath not kissed him.]* Every one knows that bowing the Knee was an Act of Worship; and so was kissing the Idol: Which was done two Ways. Either by applying their Mouth immediately to the Image (as *Cicero* against *Verres* relates of the Image of *Hercules*) or kissing their Hand before the Image, and then stretching it out, and, as it were, throwing the Kiss to it. Concerning which Rite of Adoration *Salmasius* hath given a large Account in his Annotations upon *Flav. Vopiscus* in the Life of the Emperor *Probus*; where he observes such Kisses were called *labrata oscula*; and from hence the Phrases *oscula jacere*, and *basia jactare*, and *manu venerari*, and *manu salutare*: Which he shews out of many Authors, are used for this Way of Adoration: The same he notes in his *Plin. Exercit. p. 936.* where *Pliny* saith, *in adorando dextram ad osculum referimus totum corpus circumagimus.* When we worship, we kiss our Hand, and turn about our whole Body.

Ver. 19. *So he departed thence,]* From Mount *Horeb*.

*And found Elisha the son of Shaphat,]* In his Journey towards *Damascus*.

*Who was plowing with twelve yoke of oxen before him, and he with the twelfth:]* His Servants managed the rest, and he himself drove the last. This shews him to have been a great Man; who, according to the Manner of those ancient Times, looked after his Business himself; and was taken from the Plow to be a Prophet, as the *Romans* took some from thence to be Dictators and Consuls. For nothing was in greater Esteem than Agriculture among the ancient *Greeks* and *Romans*, as well as among the *Hebrews*. In *Homer* we see Kings and Princes living upon the Fruits of their Lands and their Flocks, and labouring with their own Hands. *Hesiod* hath made a Poem on purpose to recommend the Country Life and Labour to his Brother. It would be too tedious to shew how the *Carthaginians* and *Persians*, and indeed all other ancient Nations, did not think that to do nothing, was to live nobly; but they studied how to cultivate their Lands, and employed themselves, as well as their Servants, in that Business. Whence such Persons, who were of the best Quality, were called *εὐτεργεῖς*, Men that did their Work themselves, and

L 11 2

did



did not commit the Care of it to others, but plowed with their own Hands. So *Quinctius Cincinnatus* is said by *Dionys. Halicarn. L. X.* to have returned from his Consulship, to lead, τὸν ἀνίσχυτον βίον, a Rustick Life, as he did before it. As the learned *Jac. Perizonius* observes upon *Ælian's Var. Histor. L. 1. Cap. 31.* As for the rest, the Greeks ascribe this Invention of yoking Oxen together to plow withal either to *Ceres*, and *Triptolemus*, or *Bacchus* (or some other great Person) though *Moses*, who was before them all, was well acquainted with it, *Deut. xv. 9.* And *Job* before him, *Job i. 3. xliii. 12.*

*Abarbinel* thinks these twelve Yoke of Oxen with which *Elisha* was plowing, denoted that he should be Leader of the twelve Tribes of *Israel*.

And *Elijah* passed by him, and cast his mantle upon him.] He put upon him the Prophetical Habit; which was his Inauguration. Or, as some understood it, this was a Token that he must become his Servant, and attend upon him; and consequently succeed in his Office. For Servants were wont to carry their Masters Shoes after them, and their Garments. And accordingly he waited upon him, as appears from two Phrases, in the last Verse. First he went after him; and secondly, he ministered unto him.

Ver. 20. And he left the oxen, and ran after *Elijah*,] To desire him to stay a little.

And said, Let me kiss my father and my mother,] Take his Leave of them.

And then I will follow thee.] For he understood that to be the Meaning of his throwing his Mantle upon him.

And he said unto him, Go back again;] Return to thy Oxen; and do as thou desirest.

For what have I done unto thee?] He asks him whether he thought he had done any thing to hinder him? And so this was said to try whether he understood his Meaning, and was inclinable to attend him. But *Abarbinel* thinks these Words signify, that he had conferred a great Dignity upon him; which required him to dispatch his Business immediately; and taking Leave of his Father and Mother, to come after him without any Delay; since he had done such a great thing to him. Which illustrates the Words of our Saviour, *Matth. xix. 21.*

Ver. 21. And he returned back from him,] Went Home, and then came to those that were plowing.

And took a yoke of oxen and slew them, and boiled their flesh with the instruments of the oxen, and gave unto the people, and they did eat:] He made a Feast for his Servants, Neighbours, and Friends, before he parted with them; in token of the Joy he conceived at his new Calling. Which shews he was not a poor Peasant, such as our Ploughmen are; but a Man of Condition, who was able to make a great Expence upon Occasion.

And he arose and went after *Elijah*, and ministered unto him.] Glad to leave his Estate, his Friends, and all that he had; glad to serve God in a lower Station first, before he executed the Office of a Prophet,

## C H A P. XX.

Verse 1. **A**ND *Ben-badad* king of *Syria*.] *Ben-badad* is as much as the Son of *Hadad*. Which *Hadad* was of the Seed Royal in *Edom*, and escaped into *Egypt* when *David* slew all the Males in *Edom*. (xi. 16, 17.) But infested *Solomon* in his latter Days, and endeavoured to recover his Kingdom: In which he not succeeding, it is probable he established himself in *Syria*.

Gathered all his host together,] The Father of this King had taken several Cities from the *Israelites* (ver. 34. xv. 20.) and perhaps had made them Tributaries to the *Syrians*: Which Tribute *Abab* refusing to pay, he made War upon him.

And there were thirty and two kings with him,] Such petty Princes as those in the Land of *Canaan* before the Conquest of it by *Joshua*; who were under the Protection of the King of *Syria*, and bound to serve him in his Wars. But he had better have been without them, and employed his own natural Subjects only; who had done his Business more successfully (ver. 24.) because it was their own.

And horses and chariots:] It is not said what Number; which is an Argument it was not very great.

And he went up and besieged *Samaria*, and warred against it.] He did not actually besiege it; for his Army was routed before he could do it. Therefore the Sense is, he went up to besiege *Samaria*, and assault it. Which is like that Speech, *Gen. xxviii. 10.* *Jacob* went out from *Beersheba* and went to *Haran*. Which *Rasi* interprets, he went out to go to *Haran*. For it presently follows, that God appeared to him in the Way.

Ver. 2. And sent messengers to *Abab* king of *Israel* into the city, and said unto him, Thus saith *Ben-badad*.] He speaks in a haughty Stile; just like the Messengers of the *Assyrian* Monarch to *Hezekiah*, thus saith the great king, the king of *Syria*.

Ver. 3. Thy silver and thy gold are mine, thy wives and thy children, even the goodliest, are mine.] This Message is explained, by the King of *Israel's* Answer.

Ver. 4. And the king of *Israel* answered and said, My lord, O king, according to thy saying, I am thine, and all that I have.] He was content to be his Vassal, and to hold all that he enjoyed of him: For so he understood his Demands. But *Ben-badad* intended more: Or, from his submissive Answer, took Occasion to enlarge his Demands: requiring the Property of all he had; which he resolved (as appears from his second Message, in the next Verses) to take into his own Possession.

Ver. 5. And the messengers came again, and said, Thus speaketh *Ben-badad*, saying; Although I have sent unto thee, saying, thou shalt deliver unto me thy silver, and thy gold, thy wives and thy children:

Ver. 6. Yet I will send my servants unto thee, to morrow about this time, and they shall search thy



*thy house, and the houses of thy servants; and it shall be, that whatsoever is pleasant in thine eyes, they shall put it in their hand, and take it away.]* He tells him the Meaning of his first Demand, that he should deliver all he had into his Hands. Unto which, if he now consented, it should not suffice; but he would send some of his Officers to take all, and to ransack every Corner of his Palace, and carry away from him and from his Courtiers (who are meant, I suppose, by his *Servants*) whatsoever was valuable. Or, perhaps, by *Servants* he means all his Subjects.

Ver. 7. *Then the king of Israel called all the elders of the land, and said,]* Summoned a general Council of all the great Men, to advise what to do.

*Mark, I pray, and see how this man seeketh mischief: for he sent unto me for my wives, and for my children; for my silver and my gold, and I denied them not.]* But now nothing will content him but my utter Ruin, and enslaving of our Country. In this *Abab* shewed some Sparks of Virtue remaining in him; in that while *Ben-hadad* desired only what he had in his own Disposal, that is, all his private Goods, he agreed to it: But when all the People, and the publick Good was concerned, he would do nothing without their Consent.

Ver. 8. *And all the elders, and all the people said unto him, Harken not unto him, nor consent.]* They promising unanimously, I suppose, to stand by him, and defend him against so insolent an Enemy.

Ver. 9. *Wherefore he said unto the messengers of Ben-hadad, Tell my lord the king,]* Of whom he speaks, in as humble a manner as he did at first, ver. 4.

*All that thou didst send for to thy servant at the first, I will do: But this thing I may not do.]* For his People would not yield to it.

*And the messengers departed, and brought him word again.]* Delivered this Answer to *Ben-hadad*, that *Abab* stuck to his first Concession, according as he understood his Demands; but would not consent to more.

Ver. 10. *And Ben-hadad sent unto him, and said, The gods do so to me, and more also, if the dust of Samaria shall suffice for handfuls, for all the people that follow me.]* He wishes he may perish, if he did not bring such an Army against the King of Israel, that if every Soldier in it should take an Handful of his Country, nothing of it would be left remaining. Others explain it thus; I will not leave a Bit of Samaria standing. But the other is most natural; and this is included in it.

Ver. 11. *And the king of Israel answered and said, Tell him, Let not him that girdeth on his harness boast himself, as he that putteth it off.]* A Speech like that, *Do not sing a Triumph before the Victory.*

Ver. 12. *And it came to pass when Ben-hadad heard this message (as he was drinking, he and the kings in the pavillions) that he said unto his servants, Set your selves in array: And they set themselves in array against the city.]* Whilst the Treaty lasted between him and *Abab*, he was remiss: But now he commands his Army to

be put in Order; and that they should invest Samaria, and plant their Batteries against it.

Ver. 13. *And behold there came a prophet to Abab king of Israel, saying,]* One of those that had been hid; but was now commanded by God to appear and carry a Message to *Abab*. Which the Prophet thought he might do safely, when he brought him such good News, as that which follows.

*Thus saith the LORD, hast thou seen all this great multitude? Behold, I will deliver it into thine hand this day,]* Hereby God shewed, that as he hated Idolatry, of which *Abab* was notoriously guilty, so he hated also insolent proud Boasters, who imagine they have no Superior; and that they can carry all Things as they please, by their own Power.

*And thou shalt know that I am the LORD.]* Have a new Demonstration that he was the LORD of all Things. For *Abab* had no such Message brought by any of *Baal's* Prophets; which was sufficient to convince him, that the LORD, who could foretel and do such wonderful Things, was the only God.

Ver. 14. *And Abab said, By whom?]* He gave some Credit to his Word; and only asks by whom this Deliverance should be wrought: For he knew he had not Forces enough to encounter and overthrow such powerful Enemies.

*And he said, Thus saith the LORD; even by the young men of the princes of the provinces.]* The Princes of the Provinces were the Governors of the several Provinces, into which the Kingdom was divided. And their young Men seem to signify their Servants, or their Pages, (as we speak) that waited on them. As much as to say, not by old experienced Soldiers, but by Youths; who, perhaps, had never seen a Fight, but had always lived at Court.

*And he said, Who shall order the battle?]* Or, who shall begin the Fight (as some understand these Words) they or we? Shall we make a Sally, or expect 'till they assault us?

*And he answered, Thou.]* He bids the King begin, and lead them on. Which was commanded, to encourage the young Men, and to try whether *Abab* would thus far trust God, or no.

Ver. 15. *Then he numbred the young men of the princes of the provinces, and they were two hundred thirty and two: And after them he numbred all the people, even all the children of Israel, being seven thousand.]* All that he could get together; for these sure were not all the Men of War in Israel.

Ver. 16. *And they went out]* Of Samaria.

*At noon:]* When they knew the Syrians were at Dinner, taking a Repast; if not debauching themselves, as their King was.

*And Ben-hadad was drinking himself drunk in the pavillions, he, and the kings, the thirty-two kings that helped him.]* Being perfectly secure that the Israelites durst not appear to disturb him.

Ver. 17. *And the young men of the princes of the provinces went out first,]* And *Abab*, no doubt, at the Head of them.

*And Ben-hadad sent out, and they told him, There are men come out of Samaria.]* The Meaning



ing is, that upon their first coming out *Ben-hadad*, hearing a Bustle, sent to know what was the Matter: and they told him a small Party was come out of *Samaria*.

Ver. 18. *And he said, Whether they be come out for peace, take them alive; or whether they be come out for war, take them alive.*] It was against the Law of Nations to apprehend those that came to treat of Peace: But he, in his insolent Pride, bad his People not trouble themselves to examine what they came for, but to take them alive; which he thought they might easily do, being so few.

Ver. 19. *So these young men of the princes of the provinces came out of the city, and the army which followed them.*] The young Men only appeared at first; but the rest of the Army came out a little after.

Ver. 20. *And they slew every one his man:]* Who came to apprehend them.

*And the Syrians fled, and Israel pursued them:]* At which the Syrians were so amazed, by the Suddenness of the Attempt, that they fled: Imagining them to be stronger and better prepared for War, than they were.

*And Ben-hadad the king of Syria escaped on an horse, with the horsemen.*] He was possessed with the same Fear; and did not endeavour to make his Men rally again, but fled away together with them.

Ver. 21. *And the king of Israel went out, and smote the horses and chariots, and slew the Syrians with a great slaughter.*] He went out, by the Prophet's Order, at the Head of the young Men, when they first issued out of the City. But now he went out further than he had done at the Beginning, and overtook the Chariots and Horsemen; among whom he made a great Slaughter.

Ver. 22. *And the prophet came to the king of Israel, and said, Go and strengthen thy self, and mark, and see what thou dost:]* He bad him make what Preparations he was able, and take Care that nothing was wanting to oppose the Designs of the Syrians against him; who would certainly return, and renew the Fight the next Year.

*For at the return of the year, the king of Syria will come up against thee.*] At the Time when Kings used to go out to War. Of which see 2 Sam. xi. 1.

Ver. 23. *And the servants of the king of Syria said unto him, Their gods are gods of the hills, therefore they were stronger than we:]* They did not know the God of the Universe, but only worshipped particular gods; who they thought ruled over particular Countries, and distributed several Parts of those Countries among them (some being gods of the Woods, others of the Rivers, &c.) and they imagined the God of the Hebrews to be *ὄρεόδυνς*, as *Pan* was called by the Heathen. For they had heard, perhaps, that their Law was given from Heaven upon a Mountain, and there God appeared to them: And the Country of *Israel* also was very hilly: Where, upon one eminent Hill, God's Temple was built, and he was worshipped. And it was known, that the *Israelites* delighted to sacrifice in high Places: Infomuch, that when they could not come

at them, they sacrificed on the House-Tops, *Jerem. xx. 13.*

*But let us fight against them in the plain, and surely we shall be stronger than they.*] For besides that the Syrian gods, they thought, had more Power in a flat plain Country; wherein they delighted: There also they should have more Service of their Horses and Chariots, which could not fight so well upon Mountains.

Ver. 24. *And do this thing, take the kings away, every man out of their place, and put captains in their rooms.*] He had made the thirty-two Kings, who were his Tributaries, chief Commanders in his former Army: Which his Counsellors represented to him, as a great Error; and therefore advised him to displace them, and put his own Captains in their stead, who would fight better. For they fought for their Country, which the others did not: And besides, the Kings, it is likely, were too delicate to be Warriours; and were not so obedient to Discipline, as his Captains would be.

Ver. 25. *And number thee an army like the army thou hast lost, horse for horse, chariot for chariot: and we will fight against them in the plain, and surely we shall be stronger than they.*] For his Army they knew would be superior; and they should have the Advantage of the Ground.

Ver. 26. *And it came to pass that, at the return of the year, Ben-hadad numbred the Syrians, and went up to Aphek, to fight against Israel.*] This was a City in the Tribe of *Asher*: Which it is probable, was one of those that *Benhadad's* Father had taken from the King of *Israel*, ver. 34. Not far from which was the Plain of *Galilee*, where he intended to fight.

Ver. 27. *And the children of Israel were numbred, and were all present, and went against them:]* That is, as many as could be got together were numbred, and put in Order to give them Battle.

*And the children of Israel pitched before them, like two little flocks of kids; but the Syrians filled the country.*] The Hebrew Word *Chasiph* is no where found, but in this Place; which *Kimchi* and others translate, a little Flock. But there is no need to add the Word little: For the Flocks of Goats are always small; never so great as those of Sheep. For they love to ramble, and are scattered up and down, as *Bochartus* observes; who translates these Words, two flocks of young Kids; denoting their contemptible Number, and that they were weak, feeble, and timorous, like those fugacious Creatures, as he speaks, *Hierozycon*, P. 1. Lib. 2. Cap. 51.

Ver. 28. *And there came a man of God, and spake unto the king of Israel, and said, Thus saith the LORD, because the Syrians have said, the LORD is God of the hills, but he is not God of the valleys: therefore will I deliver all this great multitude into thine hand, and ye shall know that I am the LORD.*] This Man of God, the Jews say, was the Prophet *Micaiah*.

Ver. 29. *And they pitched one over against the other seven days; and so it was, that on the seventh day the battle was joined:]* It may seem strange that they should look upon one another so



so long, and watch for Advantages, without coming to any Action: For the Syrians had so much Advantage in their Numbers, that one would think they should have immediately encompassed the Israelites, and destroyed them all. But, perhaps, the Israelites, were pitched upon a rising Ground, and the Syrians durst not attack them, 'till they came down into the Plain.

*And the children of Israel slew of the Syrians an hundred thousand footmen in one day.]* In all Probability they surprized them, by a sudden unexpected Assault: And God dismayed them, and struck such a Terror into them, that they could make no Resistance.

Ver. 30. *And the rest fled to Aphek, into the city; and there a wall fell upon twenty and seven thousand of the men that were left:]* The Wall of the City, under which they lay, to be ready to defend it, fell down; either by the Israelites Batteries, or by an Earthquake; and killed, or maimed a great Number of them that fled thither for Safety.

*And Ben-hadad fled into the city, into an inner chamber.]* In the Hebrew the Words are, *into a Chamber within a Chamber*; that is, into a very secret Place, where he thought he should not be easily found.

Ver. 31. *And his servants said unto him, Behold now, we have heard that the kings of Israel are merciful kings:]* Better-natured than other Kings unto those who were in Distress; they retaining still something of the Temper of that good King David; who was full of Humanity and Tenderneſs, unto which true Religion disposes Men above all other things.

*Let us, I pray thee,]* One of his principal Courtiers spake this in the Name of the rest.

*Put sackcloth on our loins, and ropes upon our heads, and go out to the king of Israel; peradventure he will save thy life.]* This it seems was the Posture in those Times, wherein Supplicants presented themselves, when they petitioned for Mercy; as among the Greeks and Romans they came in a mournful manner, with a Branch of Olive in their Hands. The Sackcloth upon their Loins, was a Token of great Sorrow for what they had done; and Halsters about their Necks, a Token of their Subjection to what Punishment he pleased to inflict.

Ver. 32. *So they girded sackcloth on their loins, and put ropes upon their heads, and came unto the king of Israel, and said, Thy servant Ben-hadad saith, I pray thee let me live.]* He now as humbly petitions Ahab, as Ahab a little while ago had petitioned him (ver. 4.) and he begs of him his Life. Such are the strange Turns of human Affairs, which the ancient Historians among the Heathen have observed, as Admonishments to Men not to bear themselves high in a prosperous Condition, nor trust to their present Fortune (as they called it) not knowing, *Quid serus vesper vebat*, what might fall out before the Day was done.

*And he said, Is he yet alive? he is my brother.]* He rejoiced to hear that he did not perish in the Battle; and not only pardoned him at the first Word, and gave him his Life; but expres-

sed as great Affection to him, as if he had been his Brother. This was Folly, not Mercifulness, or Good-nature. It had been enough not to have tormented him: But to let him not only live, but own him for a Brother, was stupid Inconsideration. For a Man that lately treated him so disdainfully, could never make a true Friend.

Ver. 33. *And the men did diligently observe whether any thing would come from him, and did hastily catch it: and they said, Thy brother Ben-hadad.]* They were wise Persons whom he employed in his Embassy; who watched attentively whether any kind Word would drop from his Mouth, on which they might lay hold, and make their Advantage of it, before he could retract it. And they caught at the Word Brother, and said thy Brother Ben-hadad lives, and implores this Favour that he may live.

*And he said, Go ye, bring him.]* This was strange Rashness, to make such haste, as not to advise with his Privy-Council what to do in such a Case.

*And Ben-hadad came forth to him; and he caused him to come up into the chariot.]* It seems that Ahab was still in the Field.

Ver. 34. *And Ben-hadad said unto him, The cities which my father took from thy father, I will restore,]* The Word Ben-hadad not being in the Hebrew, Osiander and some others think that Ahab, who was so kind as to take him up into his Chariot, made this Speech to him when he came there, that he would not only give him his Life, but his Kingdom also, which he had now Power to take from him; and be so far from diminishing his Power, that he would restore all that had been taken from him by his Father. Which senseless Kindness was the thing that provoked God to pronounce that heavy Doom upon him, ver. 42. But the next Words do not well agree with this: Therefore I take these to be Ben-hadad's Words to Ahab, whereby he endeavoured to smooth him up and sweeten him, by offering to become his Subject (as the next Words signify) and making Restitution of all that had been taken from his Predecessor.

*And thou shalt make streets for thee in Damascus, as my father made in Samaria.]* Some think by Streets he means Market-places, where Commodities were sold, the Toll of which should belong to Ahab. Others think he means Courts of Judgment, where he should maintain a Jurisdiction over Ben-hadad's Subjects: Others, that we now call a Piazza, of which Ahab should receive the Rents. But commonly Interpreters think he means Fortifications, whereby he might bridle the chief City of the Kingdom of Syria; that they might not make new Irruptions into the Land of Israel. Cittadels as we now speak, to keep them in Awe, and to be a Check to them, if they attempted any thing destructive to the Israelites: Yet after all, Golt. Vallandus hath said a great deal to prove that the Hebrew Word signifies Palaces, which he being allowed to build, was a great Token of Subjection. We do not read of any such thing that



that were built by the Syrian Kings in Samaria: Nor of any Cities they took from the Israelites; unless those taken from Baasha, xv. 20. who was not Ahab's Father.

Then said Ahab, I will send thee away with this covenant; so he made a covenant with him, and sent him away.] Wherein he discovered his great Weakness: For his Covenant was soon broken, as we read in the last Chapter of this Book.

Ver. 35. And a certain man of the sons of the prophets,] This the Jews will still have to be Micaiah: Which is not likely, for he is called a Prophet of the LORD, not one of the Sons of the Prophets.

Said unto his neighbour in the word of the LORD, Smite me, I pray thee,] He bad him give him such a Blow, as might wound him, ver. 37.

And the man refused to smite him.] Because it looked like Inhumanity, to strike an innocent Person, who had done him no Wrong.

Ver. 35. Then said he unto him, Because thou hast not obeyed the voice of the LORD, behold, as soon as thou art departed from me, a lion shall slay thee.] This may seem too severe a Punishment 'till these two things be considered. First, that the Prophet commanded him to smite him, and that by the Word of the LORD. Not of his own Will, and from his proper private Motion; but God required it. As if he had said (so Theodoret glosses on it) ἐν ἐγώ σοι, &c. It is not I that require this of thee, but the Spirit that is within me. And accordingly the Punishment was inflicted, because he obeyed not the voice of the LORD. And Secondly, the Prophet commanded this in God's Name, not to an ordinary Man, but El Reebu: Which should not be translated to his Neighbour, but, as St Hierom, to his Companion. And so the Targum and other ancient Interpreters, to his Fellow: That is, a Prophet bred in the same School with himself: Who well understood the Weight of these Words, I command thee in the Name of the LORD.

And as soon as he was departed from him, a lion found him and slew him.] The Jews say in the Title Sanhedrin, and other Places, that some Prophets were put to Death by the Hand of Man, and others by the Hand of God. They that prophesied what they were not told by God, or they that prophesied in the Name of Idols, were to be put to Death by the Judges. But they who concealed their Prophecy, or rejected a Prophecy, their Death was by the Hand of God.

Ver. 37. Then he found another man, and said, Smite me, I pray thee. And the man smote him, so that in smiting he wounded him.] The Intention of this was that he might find the freer Access to Ahab, as a Soldier well deserving; and that he might the better feign his Story: For in such a Matter the King was not to be dealt withal in downright Words.

Ver. 38. And the prophet departed, and waited for the king by the way, and disguised himself, with ashes upon his face.] As a Man in a very mournful Condition. The Hebrews understand it, that he covered his Face with a Vail, or an

Handkerchief, or bound it about with a Fillet (for one cannot tell how Ashes should cover it) in token that he was wounded. So that the King could not know who he was. See Bochart his Canaan, Lib. 2. Chap. 8.

Ver. 39. And as the king passed by, he cried to the king: and said, Thy servant went out into the midst of the battle,] He pretended that he had adventured his Life in the late Fight; being engaged in the hottest Service.

And behold, a man turned aside, and brought a man unto me, and said, Keep this man. If by any means he be missing, then thy life shall be for his life; or else thou shalt pay a talent of silver.] He pretended, I suppose, that his Captain having a Prisoner of great Quality, charged him with him; telling him that he should be answerable for him with his Life, if he let him escape; or redeem his Life with a greater Sum of Money than he was able to pay.

Ver. 40. And as thy servant was busy here and there,] Endeavouring, in the Fight, to do the best Service he was able every where.

He was gone.] In the Hebrew, he could not be found.

And the king of Israel said unto him, So shall thy judgment be; thy self hast decided it.] Thou hast pronounced thy own Sentence; according to your Agreement, so shalt thou suffer. He had forgot how he dismissed a greater Person willingly, else he could not have been so hard-hearted as to condemn one that had offended unwillingly. But he soon made him think of it.

Ver. 41. And he hastened and took away the ashes from his face,] Threw away his Disguise immediately; by pulling off the Cloth wherein his Face was wrapped.

And the king of Israel discovered him, that he was of the prophets.] Some of the By-standers perhaps knew him, when they saw his bare Face. Or, by the very Motion of his Eyes before he spake (which he did immediately) he sufficiently discovered what he was.

Ver. 42. And he said unto him, Thus saith the LORD, Because thou hast let a man go out of thy hand, whom I appointed to utter destruction,] For the Battle was the LORD's; and the Victory being obtained purely by the Divine Power, and the singular Favour of God, Ahab ought not to have resolved how to dispose of Ben-badad without God's Leave; but have consulted him (who had put him into his Hands) what he would have done with him: For he was God's Prisoner; who was to have his Part of the Spoil, which he would please to choose.

Therefore thy life shall go for his life, and thy people for his people.] The former Part of this Decree of God was fulfilled three Years after, when Ahab was killed in a Battle against the Syrians, xxii. 1, 2, 3, 4, &c. But the latter Part was deferred 'till the Reign of Hazael, who fulfilled it by the Wars he had with the Israelites, 2 Kings x. 32, 33.

Ver. 43. And the king of Israel went to his house heavy and displeased: and came to Samaria.] This heavy Sentence turned all their Joy for the late Victory, into Mourning: Ahab being



being much troubled for what he had done, and for what he was like to suffer.

C H A P. XXI.

Verse 1. **A**ND it came to pass after these things, that Naboth the Jezreelite had a vineyard, which was in Jezreel.] After all those wonderful things which God had done, in giving such Victories to Ahab, he coveted the Vineyard of a Neighbour of his. Which is peculiarly noted, as Abarbinel thinks, to have followed the foregoing History, to set forth the extream great Wickedness of Ahab: Who spared Ben-hadad, as Saul did Agag King of the Amalekites, and killed Naboth, that he might get his Vineyards. This was an high Aggravation of his Crime, that he basely murdered a just Israelite, and let an impious enemy escape.

*Hard by the palace of Ahab king of Samaria.]* Not far from it, if not adjoining to it: Being planted on the same rising Ground, whereon the Palace stood; for Vines thrive best in Mountainous Places.

Ver. 2. *And Ahab spake unto Naboth, saying, Give me thy vineyard, that I may have it for a garden of herbs,]* For a Flower-Garden, as some understand it.

*Because it is near my house, and I will give thee for it a better vineyard than it: or if it seem good to thee, I will give thee the worth of it in money.]* This was a fair Proposal; but the Law was against it.

Ver. 3. *And Naboth said to Ahab, The LORD forbid it me, that I should give the inheritance of my fathers unto thee.]* As it is natural to all Men to value and love the ancient Possessions that have been in their Family; so the Law of Moses prohibited the Alienation of Lands, from one Tribe or Family to another, unless a Man was reduced to Poverty; in which case he might sell it 'till the Jubilee; but then it was to return to him. See Levit. xxv. 15, 25, 28. Now as Naboth was in no need, so he considered that if he should, out of Respect to the King, and meerly to do him a Pleasure, part with his Vineyard, he should never get it out of his Hands at the Jubilee; being made part of the Ground belonging to the Royal Palace. This makes it probable that Naboth was one of the Seven Thousand, who observed the Law strictly.

Ver. 4. *And Ahab came to his house, heavy and displeased,]* Just as he had done, after the Prophet had pronounced the severe Sentence against him, xx. 43.

*Because of the word which Naboth the Jezreelite had spoken unto him: for he had said, I will not give thee the inheritance of my fathers:]* Made him a peremptory Denial; which he could not bear.

*And he laid him down upon his bed, and turned away his face, and would eat no bread.]* He was so vexed to be denied by a Subject, that he fell into such a Passion, as made him sick, and took away his Stomach, and made Company unacceptable to him. In short, he was very melancholy.

Ver. 5. *And Jezebel his wife came to him, and said, Why is thy spirit so sad, that thou eatest no*

*bread?] She soon found his Mind was more out of Order than his Body; and therefore desired to know what had disturbed him.*

Ver. 6. *And he said, Because I spake unto Naboth the Jezreelite, and said unto him, Give me thy vineyard for money; or else if it please thee, I will give thee another vineyard for it: and he answered, I will not give thee my vineyard.]* He doth not acquaint her with his Reason; but reports his Answer, as if he gave him a surly Refusal. Which was far otherwise; Naboth representing it as a Religious Duty (ver. 3.) founded upon the Law of God, not to part with the Inheritance of his Fathers, which was allotted to them by Joshua; never to be alienated. For in truth they that possessed them were only *Usufructuaries* (i. e. enjoyed the Profits of them) God himself being the true Proprietor, Levit. xxv. 23. who charged their Land with no other Payments, but *Tenths* and *first Fruits* to his Ministers: After which he gave them an entire Possession of it, to remain in their several Families for ever, without any Alteration; which none could make but himself.

Ver. 7. *And Jezebel his wife said unto him, Dost thou now govern the kingdom of Israel?] Is this like a King, to torment thy self in this manner? as Rabbag glosses. Or, doth it become a King to beg and pray, and not rather command? Thou knowest not thine own Power, but actest like a Minor, who hath no Authority. Or, as Abarbinel understands it, Canst thou expect things should go well in thy Kingdom, if thou hast neither Will nor Power to do any thing, in such a small Matter as this?*

*Arise, and eat bread, and let thy heart be merry, and I will give thee the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite.]* She would not have him trouble himself; but leave her to accomplish his Desires.

Ver. 8. *So she wrote letters in Ahab's name, and sealed them with his seal,]* These Seals were wont to be worn upon one of the Fingers of their Hand (Jerem. xxii. 24.) and never to be taken off Night nor Day, but when they used them. Which shews she was an audacious Woman, that durst steal this from Ahab's Finger (for it doth not appear he knew of these Letters) and write what she pleased in his Name; that is, use his Kingly Authority to what Purposes she thought good.

*And sent the letters unto the elders, and to the nobles that were in his city dwelling with Naboth.]* The Israelites, it seems, after their Separation from Judah, kept up the civil Polity which was ordained by Moses (though they forsook his Religion) having Elders and Judges in their several Cities, as they had here at Jezreel: Where they had not only Elders, but also Nobles: That is, Captains of Thousands, and Hundreds, as Bon. Bertram observes, Cap. 12. de Repub. Judaica.

Ver. 9. *And she wrote in the letters, saying, Proclaim a fast,]* As if there had been some grievous Crime committed, or some great Calamity had befallen them; which all the People were to bewail, and purge themselves from that Sin, lest they also should become guilty. And consequently they were to see the Crime punished



punished very severely: For such Days of Fasting were spent in punishing Offences, and doing Justice, and praying to God for Pardon. Some ask where it was kept? And *Vitranga* thinks it might possibly be in the very Streets of the City: Where *Ezra* kept his Fast, *Nehem.* viii. 1, 2, 3.

*And set Naboth up on high among the people:]* In this religious Assembly of the People. For he being a Person of an illustrious House (as *Josephus* reports) was ordered to be set in an honourable Place: That so it might not be thought they condemned him out of Hatred, but with Grief and Respect to his Person; being constrained merely by the Evidence given against him. Yet, others will have it, that the Reason he was set in an eminent Place, was only because all People accused and arraigned were wont so to appear before the Judges; that all the People might see them, and hear what was alledged against them, and the Proofs of it, and their Defence.

*Ver. 10. And set two men of Belial]* Men of no Conscience, that would swear any thing for Money.

*Before him, to bear witness against him, saying,]* Such was the Roman Custom also (which was most rational) that the Accused should have the Accusers Face to Face: As *Festus* saith, *Acts* xxv. 16. But some think that she need not have put her self to this Trouble, of proceeding in such a formal manner against *Naboth* in a Court of Justice; for by the *Jus Regium* mentioned by *Samuel* (1. viii. 14.) she might have taken his Vineyard from him, by *Abab's* absolute Power. But that is a great Mistake; for *Samuel* only meant, that their Kings would take the Fruits of their Vineyard upon Occasion for their Use; but not the Possession of the Vineyards themselves; for so all the Land might have become the King's: And that *Jus Regium* *Josephus* calls a meer Tyranny.

*Thou didst blaspheme God and the king:]* The Hebrews so much abhorred this Crime of Blasphemy, that they would not express it by its proper Name; but said *Bless*, instead of *Curse*; as here and in the Book of *Job*. Now it was Death by the Law of *Moses* to blaspheme God, *Levit.* xxiv. 16. and by Custom it was Death to blaspheme the King, which is forbidden in those Words, *Exod.* xx. 28. And perhaps they might stretch that Law hither, which forbade any Man upon Pain of Death, to curse his Father or his Mother, *Exod.* xxi. 17. For the Prince is the Father of his Country. But, to make all sure, they accused *Naboth* of both, of Treason against God, and against the King; that so the People might be the better satisfied, to see him stoned. But there is this Difference to be observed between these two: That if a Man had only blasphemed God, he was to be tried by the great Court at *Jerusalem* (as the Hebrew Doctors tell us) and his Goods came to his Heirs: But when any Man was executed for Treason against the King, his Estate went to the Exchequer, being forfeited to him against whom the Offence was committed. And therefore it was that they accused *Naboth* of this Crime, on purpose that his

Estate might be confiscated, and *Abab* enjoy his Vineyard. And they accused him of Blasphemy against God for other Reasons: That Justice might be done the sooner upon him; or, as the *Talmudists* speak, to increase their Indignation. See *Selden de Successionibus*, Cap. 25. Fol. 87, 88.

*And then carry him out,]* Not meerly out of the Assembly, but out of the City, *ver.* 13. For in the Wilderness, and before the Conquest of *Canaan*, they executed Punishments without the Camp, *Levit.* xxiv. 23. *Josh.* vii. 24. and afterwards without the Gate of the City: Whereby they intended to testify that they would take the Evil out of the midst of them, and not suffer Wickedness to remain among them. So it is explained, *ver.* 13. See *Grotius* *Matth.* xxvii. 32.

*And stone him that he may die.]* For this was the Punishment of Blasphemy: As we see by their Attempt to stone our Saviour, and their killing *St Stephen* in this manner.

Concerning this Punishment, see the *Sanhedrin*, Cap. 6.

*Ver. 11. And the men of the city, even the elders, and the nobles, who were the inhabitants of his city,]* The principal Inhabitants.

*Did as Jezebel had sent unto them, and as she had written in the letters which she had sent unto them.]* Perhaps she sent private Messengers to tell them by Word of Mouth, what she expected from them, and how she would reward them; as well as publick Letters to authorize what they did. And Princes never want Instruments to execute their Pleasure. But it is much there should be none among the Judges, and great Men, that abhorred such Villany: Which argues the great Corruption of their Manners by Idolatry.

*Ver. 12. They proclaimed a fast, and set Naboth on high among the people.*

*Ver. 13. And there came in two men, children of Belial, and sat before him:]* As the Witnesses used to do in Courts of Judgment; testifying to his Face the Truth of the Accusation brought against him.

*And the men of Belial witnessed against him, even against Naboth, in the presence of the people, saying, Naboth did blaspheme God and the king.]* This signifies no more, but that they had the Impudence publickly to testify a Falsity. Though *Bertram* in the Book before-mentioned, Cap. 12. from these Words in the presence of the people, argues, *Potestatem Populi*, the Power of the People in this Kingdom: Because these suborned Witnesses gave their Testimony before them. So that it was a mixed Government, like ours, consisting of the Power of the King, of the Nobles, and of the People. If this be true, it argues all the People of that Place to be very wicked; in that none of them excepted against the Testimony of such Persons, which ought not (as *Maimonides* observes) to have been admitted.

*Then they carried him forth out of the city, and stoned him with stones, that he died.]* And his Sons with him, as many gather from 2 *Kings* ix. 26. they being condemned as Accessories to his Crime.

*Ver. 14.*



Ver. 14. *Then they sent to Jezebel, saying, Naboth is stoned, and is dead.]* They knew that the Order came from her; and therefore let her know they had obeyed it.

Ver. 15. *And it came to pass, when Jezebel heard that Naboth was stoned, and was dead, that Jezebel said to Ahab, Arise, take possession of the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite, which he refused to give thee for money: for Naboth is not alive, but dead.]* But by what Title did he take Possession? The *Hebrews*, I observed before, think it was by the right of Confiscation; which was practised in all such Crimes against the King. See upon 2 Sam. ix. 7. and Grotus upon Josh. i. 18. and upon this Place. Though others think, he took Possession for want of Heirs; his Children being condemned with him.

Ver. 16. *And it came to pass, when Ahab heard that Naboth was dead, that Ahab rose up to go down to the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite, to take possession of it.]* He could not but know how Naboth died; and therefore by this consented to that Wickedness, which was committed also by his Authority, ver. 8.

Ver. 17. *And the word of the LORD came to Elijah the Tishbite, saying,]* Some lesser Prophets were employed in the late Messages sent unto him, xx. 13, 28, 35. But upon this great Occasion God sends *Elijah*, whom he dreaded, not meerly to reprove him, but to condemn him to a Punishment suitable to the Crime he had committed.

Ver. 18. *Arise, go down to meet Ahab king of Israel, which is in Samaria:]* That is, who reigns in Samaria, ver. 1.

*Behold, he is in the vineyard of Naboth, whither he is gone down to possess it.]* That he might be sure not to lose his Labour, he tells him where he might find him.

Ver. 19. *And thou shalt speak unto him, saying, Thus saith the LORD, hast thou killed, and also taken possession?]* He expresses in Brief the Barbarity of this Fact: As if he had said, Was it not enough that thou hast taken away his Life, but thou must seize on his Estate, and go thy self in Person to take Possession of it?

*And thou shalt speak unto him, saying, Thus saith the LORD, In the place where dogs licked the blood of Naboth, shall dogs lick thy blood, even thine.]* He declares the Cause of this Judgment upon him, but doth not assign the Place; for the Dogs licked Ahab's Blood in Samaria, xxii. 38. Therefore these Words should be translated, *as the Dogs licked, or in like manner as they licked Naboth's Blood, so shall they lick thine: Mark what I say, even thine.*

Ver. 20. *And Ahab said to Elijah, Hast thou found me, O my enemy?]* As much as to say, Wilt thou never suffer me to be quiet? How darest thou to appear in my Presence again, with such terrible Threatnings?

*And he answered, I have found thee: because thou hast sold thy self to work evil in the sight of the LORD.]* They that sell themselves, are wholly under the Power of their Masters: So was Ahab under the Power of Sin; a perfect Slave to his sinful Lusts and Passions, which hurried him into the foulest Crimes.

VOL. II.

Ver. 21. *Behold, I will bring evil upon thee, and will take away thy posterity, and will cut off from Ahab him that pisseth against the wall, and him that is shut up, and left in Israel,]* See upon xiv. 10.

Ver. 22. *And I will make thy house like the house of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, and like the house of Baasha the son of Abijah, for the provocation wherewith thou hast provoked me to anger, and made Israel to sin.]* These two Families were utterly extirpated, (See xv. 29. xvi. 11, 12, &c.) as he prophesied Ahab's should be.

Ver. 23. *And of Jezebel also spake the LORD, saying, The dogs shall eat Jezebel by the wall of Jezreel.]* In the Territory where Naboth was judged, and unjustly condemned.

Ver. 24. *Him that dieth of Ahab in the city, the dogs shall eat: and him that dieth in the field shall the fowls of the air eat.]* See xiv. 11.

Ver. 25. *But there was none like unto Ahab, which did sell himself to work wickedness in the sight of the LORD,]* Made himself a perfect Bondslave to all manner of Wickedness.

*Whom Jezebel his wife stirred up.]* Which did not excuse him, yet something mitigated his Punishment: For she died more miserably than he.

Ver. 26. *And he did very abominably in following idols, according to all things as did the Amorites,]* There was no Abomination which the People of Canaan committed (who are here called the *Amorites*, according to the ancient Language, Gen. xv. 16.) which he did not imitate.

*Whom the LORD cast out before the children of Israel.]* As he intended to cast out the whole Family of Ahab: Who by God's Judgments upon the *Amorites*, might have taken Warning not to tread in their Steps.

Ver. 27. *And it came to pass when Ahab heard these words, that he rent his clothes, and put on sackcloth upon his flesh, and fasted, and lay in sackcloth, and went softly.]* All these were Expressions of very great Sorrow and Heaviness; which were usual in Mourning. And the last Words the *Chaldee Paraphrast* translates, *he went barefoot.* But it is rejected by the greatest Part of Interpreters, who take it as we do, for such a slow Pace as signified he was reduced to great Weakness and Feebleness of Body, by Fasting, and Grief; or that he had no Heart to go about any Business. The *Jews* tell us in *Pirke Elieser*, Cap. xliii. that he sent to *Jehoshaphat* King of Judah, who came and gave him a certain Number of Stripes every Day; and that three Times in a Day. But without this fabulous Addition, here is enough to signify that he was extremely cast down, and very much troubled; I cannot say for his Sin, but for the heavy Punishment God had laid upon him. It is likely, indeed, for the present he might have some Sense of his Sins; but it did not last to bring him to true Repentance; that is, to make him forsake them. For we read not so much as of any Restitution of the Vineyard; much less of his forsaking Idols.

Ver. 28. *And the word of the LORD came to Elijah the Tishbite, saying,*

M m m 2

Ver. 29.



Ver. 29. *Seest thou how Abab humbled himself before me? Because he humbled himself before me,]* Which neither Jeroboam nor Baasha had done, but obstinately went on, without the least Token of Sorrow, when the same Doom was passed on them.

*I will not bring the evil in his days: but in his sons days will I bring the evil upon his house.]* Such a Power there is in hearty Repentance and Reformation of Life to obtain a Pardon, that God remitted part of Abab's Punishment, at least deferred it, upon this imperfect Repentance. Which argued some Degree of Belief of what the Prophet said: And accordingly it was his Son's Blood, not his, which was licked up by the Dogs in that Portion of Ground where Naboth's was, 2 Kings ix. 25, 26.

## C H A P. XXII.

Verse 1. *AND they continued three years]* Not compleat, but Part of three Years. See 2 Chron. xviii. 2.

*Without war between Syria and Israel.]* Tho' God was very angry with Israel, and intended to plague them by the Syrians; yet his Anger being deferred for some Time upon Abab's Humiliation, Elijah did not cause Hazael to be anointed King of Syria, who was to be the Executioner of God's Wrath, because it was prolonged for the Reason now named. Thus Abarbinel.

Ver. 2. *And it came to pass that in the third year, Jehoshaphat king of Judah came down to the king of Israel.]* For there was an Affinity made between him and Abab, (2 Chron. xviii. 1.) Jehoshaphat's Son having married Abab's Daughter, 2 Kings viii. 18.

Ver. 3. *And the king of Israel said unto his servants, Know ye that Ramoth-Gilead is ours, and we be still, and take it not out of the hand of the king of Syria?]* Some think Ben-hadad had not made good his Covenant to restore all the Cities the Syrians had taken from Israel (xx. 34.) whereof this, it is likely, was one.

Ver. 4. *And he said unto Jehoshaphat, Wilt thou go with me to battle to Ramoth-Gilead?]* He acted now like a prudent Man; who, before he resolved upon a War, desired to know whether he might depend upon Jehoshaphat for his Assistance in it: For his Forces, in Comparison with the Syrians, were very small, xx. 27.

*And Jehoshaphat said to the king of Israel, I am as thou art, my people as thy people, my horses as thy horses.]* He professes himself intirely at his Service; as if they were but one Person and People.

Ver. 5. *And Jehoshaphat said unto the king of Israel, Enquire, I pray thee at the word of the LORD to day.]* But he desired first, that the Prophets who were in Israel might be forthwith consulted, whether God approved of their Design, and would give them Success in it. So good Men were wont to do, Judges i. 1. 1 Sam. xxiii. 2.

Ver. 6. *Then the king of Israel gathered the prophets together, about four hundred men,]* Some think these were the Prophets of the Groves, who were not slain with the Prophets of Baal, because they are just the same Number, xviii. 19. But perhaps there were Schools of the Prophets kept up still in Israel, in imitation of those in Judah, wherein Men were bred up, who pretended to have this Gift. But it is plain they were false Prophets; for Micaiah calls them Abab's Prophets. See ver. 23.

*And said unto them, Shall I go up against Ramoth-Gilead to battle, or shall I forbear? And they said, Go up; for the LORD shall deliver it into the hand of the king.]* They speak, as if they were inspired by the LORD, and in his Name promise good Success; for they knew Jehoshaphat regarded not Baal, nor Astarte, but only the LORD.

Ver. 7. *And Jehoshaphat said, Is there not here a prophet of the LORD besides, that we might enquire of him?]* He doth not reject these as no Prophets of the LORD, though he suspected them; and therefore desired to know, if there was any other that was accounted a Prophet of the LORD, from whom he might receive further Satisfaction. And indeed it is not likely that Abab would adventure to send for such Prophets, as were professed Servants of Baal, from whom Jehoshaphat he knew would receive no Advice: But they professed themselves to be Servants of the LORD; for whom Elijah's late Miracle had wrought in Abab some Respect. And Dr Jackson seems to me to have produced a good Argument for this, from Jehoshaphat's continuing his Resolution of accompanying Abab to Battle, notwithstanding all that Micaiah had said against it. Which he would never have done, had he believed that Micaiah alone belonged unto the LORD, and his Adversaries unto Baal, Book 2. upon the Creed, Chap. 18. paragr. 2.

Ver. 8. *And the king of Israel said unto Jehoshaphat, There is yet one man (Micaiah the son of Imlah) by whom we may enquire of the LORD; but I hate him, for he doth not prophesy good concerning me, but evil. And Jehoshaphat said, Let not the king say so.]* We ought to love those who speak the Truth; not those who speak what pleaseth us.

Ver. 9. *And the king of Israel called an officer, and said, Hasten hither Micaiah, the son of Imlah.]* He would not deny Jehoshaphat's Desire of hearing him, as well as others; lest he should fly off from his kind Offer, ver. 4.

Ver. 10. *And the king of Israel, and the king of Judah sat each on his throne, having on their robes,]* Their Royal Apparel, and all the Ensigns of Majesty.

*In a void place, in the entrance of the gate of Samaria,]* Where the People used to meet, and Causes were heard by the Courts of Justice. See upon 2 Sam. xix. 8.

*And all the prophets prophesied before them.]* Continued to encourage them in their Design.

Ver. 11. *And Zedekiah the son of Chenaanah made him horns of iron: and he said, Thus saith the*



the LORD, with these shalt thou push the Syrians, until thou have consumed them.] Such was the manner, it seems, of Prophets in ancient times, by external Signs to represent future Events: As *Isaiab* and *Jeremiah* continued to do in future Ages, *Isaiab* xx. 2. *Jeremiah* xxvii. 2.

Ver. 12. *And all the prophets prophesied so, saying, Go up to Ramoth-Gilead, and prosper: for the LORD shall deliver it into the kings hand.*] Every one of them accorded in the same Sense; that he should certainly be victorious.

Ver. 13. *And the messenger that was gone to call Micaiah, spake unto him, saying, Behold now the words of the prophets declare good unto the king with one mouth: Let thy word, I pray thee, be like the word of one of them, and speak that which is good.*] So mightily did the Opinion of *Universality* sway with the superstitious People, that the Messenger thought he could persuade *Micaiah* not to dissent from the rest; lest he should fall under the Censure of Singularity, Peevishness, and Privacy of Spirit. And thus it is in the Church at this Day, as the same excellent Doctor there observes.

Ver. 14. *And Micaiah said, As the LORD liveth, what the LORD saith unto me, that will I speak.*] He seems as yet to have no Revelation about the matter; but when the Question was put to him, God taught him what to answer.

Ver. 15. *So he came to the king; and the king said unto him, Micaiah, shall we go against Ramoth-Gilead to battle, or shall we forbear?*] The very same Question that had been asked the rest of the Prophets, ver. 6.

*And he answered him, Go, and prosper: for the LORD shall deliver it into the hand of the king.*] And he gave the very same Answer in the same Word that the other Prophets had done, ver. 12. But spake them in such a manner, that *Ahab* plainly discerned, he derided and mocked: It being as if he had said, To what Purpose shall I contradict your Prophets? For you have a mind to go, and do so; try the Truth of their Prediction.

Ver. 16. *And the king said unto him, How many times shall I adjure thee, that thou tell me nothing but that which is true, in the name of the LORD?*] He had not adjured him at all; but now he doth; and would do it again, and again, if he did not speak seriously, and tell him what God said to him: Which *Micaiah* had not yet done. For he doth not use the common Preface of Prophets, to the foregoing Answer, *Thus saith the LORD*: Because he did not speak in God's Name, but in his own.

Ver. 17. *And he said, I saw all Israel scattered upon the hills,*] Routed, and flying from their Enemies, to the Hills for Safety.

*As sheep that have not a shepherd:*] In a most miserable Condition, as Sheep are without a Shepherd to look after them: They being neither strong, nor cunning, nor nimble and swift of Feet; but exposed to the Injuries of all Creatures, when they are left to themselves without a Shepherd. Which is very often re-

peated in the Scriptures, as if it were a *Proverbial* Speech among the Hebrews, *Numb.* xxvii. 17. 2 *Chron.* xviii. 16. *Zachar.* x. 2. xiii. 7. *Matth.* ix. 36.

*And the LORD said, These have no master,*] They have lost their King and Governour. Who was represented by the *Shepherd* before-mentioned.

*Let them return every man to his house in peace.*] All go home, and think no more of War: having lost their Ruler. This was an exact Representation of what followed.

Ver. 18. *And the king of Israel said unto Jehoshaphat, Did I not tell thee, that he would prophesy no good concerning me, but evil?*] He had always been wont to bring threatening Messages from God to him: And therefore was not (as the Jews imagine) the Prophet who brought him that gracious Message, when *Ben-hadad* treated him so insolently, xx. 13.

Ver. 19. *And he said, Hear thou therefore the word of the LORD:*] If thou dost not delight only in Lies, hear what I have further to say from the LORD.

*I saw the LORD sitting on his throne, and all the host of heaven standing by him, on his right hand and on his left.*] This is a Parabolical Speech, as *Abarbinel* calls it, signifying that there was a greater King than *Ahab*, who would judge him according to his Works. And in a Vision he saw him sitting on a Throne, for that purpose, and attended by the Heavenly Host, as *Ahab* was by his Prophets: Some on his right hand, by which many think he means the good Angels; and some on his left hand, by which are meant the bad, who are the Executioners of his Judgments, when he pleases.

Ver. 20. *And the LORD said, Who shall persuade Ahab, that he may go up and fall at Ramoth-Gilead?*] It is not to be thought there was any such Consultation before the Divine Majesty, who should be employed to persuade him to undo himself: But these Representations are contrived to bring down invisible things to the meanest Capacities of Men. Who were to know that the LORD resolved to let *Ahab* be deceived and perish at *Ramoth-Gilead*, rather than any other Place: That he who let *Ben-hadad* escape, might be punished by *Ben-hadad*.

*And one said on this manner, and another on that manner.*] This is said, only to signify that God hath many Ways of bringing Men to Ruin, when he declares it.

Ver. 21. *And there came forth a spirit, and stood before the LORD, and said, I will persuade him.*] This is not to be understood literally; but that there are evil Spirits who are very forward to entice Men to their own Destruction, and have Power so to do, if the LORD do not hinder them.

Ver. 22. *And the LORD said unto him, Wherewith?*] God was not ignorant of what he could, and would do: But this is said, to represent more familiarly to vulgar Understandings, by what means *Ahab* was led into Destruction.



*And he said, I will go forth, and will be a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets.] Suggest to them that which will deceive him.*

*And he said, Thou shalt persuade him, and prevail also: Go forth, and do so.]* God permitted this lying Spirit to follow his own Inclinations, which he knew would have Success, and prevail with *Abab* to believe he should prosper in this War; wherein God intended he should be destroyed. For the Prophets had observed how prosperous *Abab* had been in former Wars with the King of Syria: Which made them forward to promise the same Success in this also. And *Abab* was as forward to believe it, as they were to assure it.

Ver. 23. *Now therefore behold, the LORD hath put a lying spirit in the mouth of all these thy prophets,]* They were properly *Abab's* Prophets, not the LORD's: Who only employed them to mislead him.

*And the LORD hath spoken evil concerning thee.]* The LORD hath decreed he should perish in this War; and in order to it, stirred up the Spirit of the Prophets (as *Abarbinel* speaks) to prophesy according to their own Inclination; and him to believe them, and rush into his own Ruin.

Ver. 24. *And Zedekiah the son of Chenaanah went near,]* He seems to be the chief of *Abab's* Prophets: The Head perhaps of the whole College.

*And smote Micaiah on the cheek,]* By way of Reproach and Scorn, *Jerem. xx. 2. S. Mark xiv. 45.* and other Places.

*And said, Which way went the spirit of the LORD from me to speak unto thee?]* He was confident he had the Spirit, and could not imagine how it should depart from him, and enter into *Micaiah*, bidding him contradict all that he and his Brethren had prophesied.

Ver. 25. *And Micaiah said, Behold, thou shalt see in that day, when thou shalt go into an inner chamber]* Into a secret Place, *xx. 30.*

*To hide thy self.]* For fear he should be seized and punished as a false Prophet, and the Cause of *Abab's* Death.

Ver. 26. *And the king of Israel said, Take Micaiah, and carry him back to Amon the governour of the city, and to Joash the king's son:]* It seems he was in Custody, when he was sent for by the Messenger to come to *Abab*.

Ver. 27. *And say, Thus saith the king, put this fellow in prison,]* He ordered him, I suppose, to be kept a closer Prisoner than before.

*And feed him with the bread of affliction, and the water of Affliction, 'till I come again in peace.]* He would not have him starved, but fed with coarse Bread, and bad Water; 'till he came home and brought Victory along with him. And then perhaps he intended to put him to Death.

Ver. 28. *And Micaiah said, If thou return at all in peace, the LORD hath not spoken by me. And he said, Harken, O people, every one of you.]* He desires all the People to mark, and be Witnesses of what he said; and take this for a Sign whether he was a true Prophet or no.

Ver. 29. *So the king of Israel, and Jehoshaphat king of Judah, went up to Ramoth-Gilead.]* Notwithstanding the long Declaration *Micaiah* had made of God's Decree (which was altogether concerning *Abab*) *Jehoshaphat* gave some Credit to the other Prophets, who spake in the Name of the LORD, as well as he. See upon ver. 7.

Ver. 30. *And the king of Israel said unto Jehoshaphat, I will disguise my self, and enter into the Battle,]* Like a private Man.

*But put thou on thy robes.]* Appear like a King.

*And the king of Israel disguised himself, and went into the battle.]* He knew they would aim most at him, as the Author of this War; and therefore he would not be known; but gives *Jehoshaphat* the Honour (as he pretended) of leading the Army, and appearing as the chief Commander of it. But this seems a very odd Compliment, to pray him to expose himself to the Danger, which he shunned. Therefore others render it, *put on these robes* (which he then offered him) After my Example, lay thy Cloak, the Garment of a chief Commander, aside; and put on these Robes. For he brought a double Change of Raiment into the Field; that neither of them might be known by their Cloaths.

Ver. 31. *And the king of Syria commanded his thirty-two captains who had rule over his chariots,]* Which were divided, it is likely, into so many distinct Bodies.

*Saying, fight neither with small nor great,]* With common Soldier, or Officer, belonging to *Jehoshaphat*.

*Save only with the king of Israel.]* Whom he looked upon (as I said) as the sole Author of the War; into which he had drawn *Jehoshaphat*.

Ver. 32. *And it came to pass, when the captains of the chariots saw Jehoshaphat, they said, Surely it is the king of Israel.]* Which shews that whatsoever his Robes were, he looked like more than a common Man.

*And they turned aside to fight with him: and Jehoshaphat cried out.]* Unto the LORD for Help. Who delivered him, and moved them to depart from him, as we read in *2 Chron. xviii. 31.*

Ver. 33. *And it came to pass, when the captains of the chariots perceived that it was not the king of Israel]* By calling upon the LORD for Help; or, perhaps, some of them knew him.

*That they turned back from pursuing him.]* Which was to be ascribed to the secret Providence of God, as *Ezra* tells us in the Place above named; who resolved as wonderfully to preserve *Jehoshaphat*, as to destroy *Abab*.

Ver. 34. *And a certain man drew a bow at a venture, and smote the king of Israel between the joints of the harness:]* The LORD, no doubt, directing the Arrow to that Part, where it should penetrate into his Vital Parts. The LXX, into his Breast, through his Lungs; for it entred between his upper and lower Armour.



*Wherefore he said to the driver of his chariot, Turn thy hand, and carry me out of the host, for I am wounded.]* He bid him drive to some Place, where he might look after his Wound, which was very painful to him.

Ver. 35. *And the battle increased that day : and the king was stayed up in his chariot against the Syrians, and died at even :]* There was a sharp Fight after this : Infomuch that the King, for fear his Soldiers should run away, would return into the Field, notwithstanding his Wounds, and be supported in his Chariot, to encourage his Army, 'till the Even parted them, and then he died.

*And the blood ran out of the wound, into the midst of the chariot.]* It could not be stanch'd by any Means they could use, but ran out of his Body into his Chariot.

Ver. 36. *And there went a proclamation throughout the host, about the going down of the son, saying, Every man to his city, and every man to his own country.]* I suppose, *Jehoshaphat* ordered a Retreat to be founded; and the Syrians, it is likely, were content to be gone, having slain their capital Enemy. By this Proclamation, the Prediction of *Micaiah* was exactly fulfilled, according to his Vision, ver. 17.

Ver. 37. *So the king died, and was brought to Samaria, and they buried the king in Samaria.*

Ver. 38. *And one washed the chariot in the pool of Samaria, and the dogs licked up the blood, and they washed his armour, according to the word of the LORD which he spake.]* The Dogs licked up the Blood, which was mixed with the Water, wherewith his Chariot and Armour were washed : The LXX add the Word *ὅς*, as if Swine as well as Dogs had licked it up. But as there is no such Word in the Hebrew, so neither is it in the Chaldee, Arabick, or Syriack ; no, nor in the Latin Translation. And it is very absurd ; Swine being not commonly kept in this Country.

Ver. 39. *Now the rest of the acts of Ahab, and all that he did, and the ivory house that he made, and all the cities that he built, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel ?]* It appears by this short History ; that he had several noble Qualities in him, and would have been a great Man, if he had not been incurably addicted to Idolatry. But it is not to be imagined that the House here mentioned, was built of Ivory ; but only inlaid with it.

Ver. 40. *So Ahab slept with his fathers, and Abaziah his son reigned in his stead.]* See ver. 51.

Ver. 41. *And Jehoshaphat the son of Asa began to reign over Judah, in the fourth year of Ahab king of Israel.*

Ver. 42. *Jehoshaphat was thirty-five years old when he began to reign, and reigned twenty-five years in Jerusalem : and his mothers name was Azubah the daughter of Shilbi.]* The Intention of the Divine Writer of this Book was as *Abarbinel* observes, principally and in the first Place to give us the History of the Kings of the House of David, with which he begins, and then joins to it the History of the Kings of Israel. Thus having finished the History of

*Asa* King of Judah, he recounts the Affairs of Israel under *Ahab* ; who being dead, he returns to the History of the Kings of Judah, who were the chief Objects of his History.

Ver. 43. *He walked in all the ways of his father Asa, he turned not aside from it, doing that which was right in the eyes of the LORD : Nevertheless, the high places were not taken away ; the people offered and burnt incense yet in the high places.]* This Error was so deeply rooted, that the best of the Kings 'till *Hezekiah's* Time (as I noted before) connived at it : And a great Man of ours thinks the Prophets accidentally gave Countenance to it. Who had this Power, that if they dispensed with any positive Precept of the Law, that Precept was to cease for a Time. Nor can any other Reason be given of the Toleration of High Places, before the Temple was built, and after that, of *Elijah's* sacrificing upon Mount Carmel, and the Forbearance of Circumcision in the Wilderness. See Mr *Thorndike's* Review of the Rights of the Church, pag. 107.

Ver. 44. *And Jehoshaphat made peace with the king of Israel.]* He did not take the Advantage which *Ahab's* Death gave him, to seize upon the Kingdom of Israel, and take it from his Son.

Ver. 45. *Now the rest of the acts of Jehoshaphat, and his might that he shewed, and how he warred, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah ?]* See xi. 41.

Ver. 46. *And the remnant of the Sodomites which remained in the days of Asa his father, took he out of the land.]* He made a narrower Search after them, than his Father had done, who is said to have removed them ; but some remained without his Knowledge, xv. 12.

Ver. 37. *There was no king in Edom : a deputy was king.]* The King of Judah deputed one to govern the Edomites ; who was the Viceroy (as we now speak) of the King of Judah. This continued from the Days of David, who began this Dominion over them (2 Sam. viii. 14.) unto those of *Jehoshaphat* ; whose Son lost this Authority, 2 Kings viii. 21.

Ver. 48. *And Jehoshaphat made ships of Tharshish, to go to Ophir for gold :]* These Ships were not to go to Tarshish, but to Ophir. But they are called Ships of Tharshish, from their Form : For they were made after the Mold of those Ships which traded to that Place. And all such Ships, wheresoever they were built, were called Ships of Tharshish. Thus *Abarbinel*. Which seems not to agree with 2 Chron. xx. 36, 37. See there.

*But the ships were broken at Ezion-Geber.]* Before they sailed.

Ver. 49. *Then said Abaziah the son of Ahab unto Jehoshaphat, Let my servants go with thy servants in the ships : but Jehoshaphat would not.]* He had contracted an Amity with this King, and engaged himself so far, as to let him join with him in this Navy, 2 Chron. xx. 35, &c. But being better instructed by his ill Success, and by the Reproof of a Prophet, he would not continue this League with him.

Ver. 50. *And Jehoshaphat slept with his fathers, and was buried with his fathers, in the city*



city of David his father: and Jehoram his son reigned in his stead.

Ver. 51. *And Abaziah the son of Ahab began to reign over Israel in Samaria the seventeenth year of Jehoshaphat king of Judah,]* This seems not to agree with the Account we have before, that Jehoshaphat began his Reign in the fourth Year of Ahab, and Ahab reigned two and twenty Years. Now if we take four from twenty and two, there remains eighteen; and so Abaziah began to reign in that Year, not the seventeenth of Jehoshaphat. But this is easily and truly solved: For the Years which the Kings of Israel reigned, are taken from the Years of the Kings of the House of David: So that if any one reigned in the latter End of the Reign of a King of the House of David, and the Beginning of the following Year, he is said to have reigned two Years. An instance of which is in the very next Words of this Verse.

*And reigned two years over Israel.]* Not complete, as appears from 2 Kings iii. 1. but part

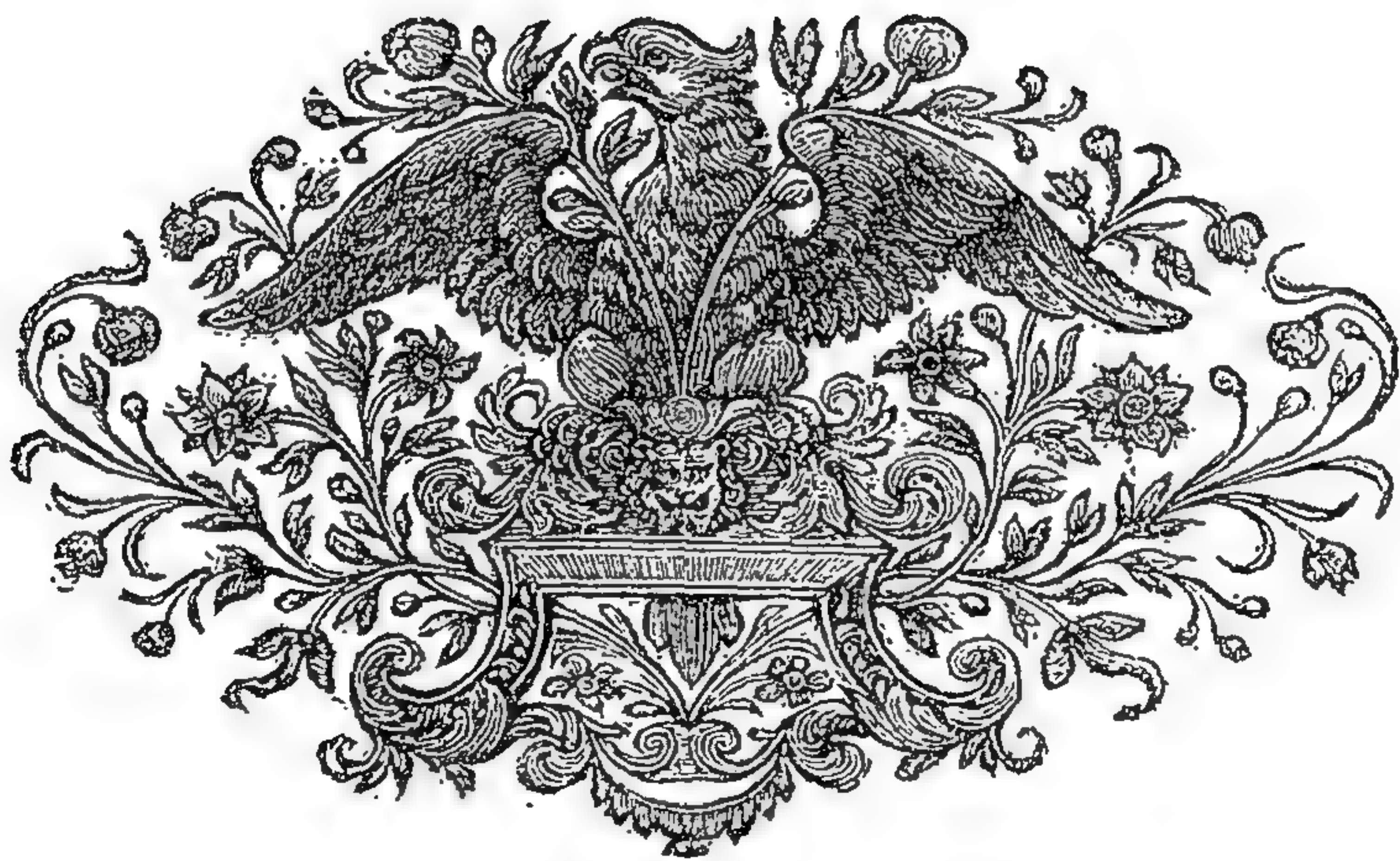
of two Years: For Abaziah died before his second Year was ended.

Ver. 52. *And he did evil in the sight of the LORD, and walked in the way of his father, and in the way of his mother,]* Who was still alive, to keep him in his Idolatry.

*And in the way of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin.]* He was in nothing amended, by all that had befallen his Father, and the Family of Jeroboam.

Ver. 53. *For he served Baal, and worshipped him,]* Which Worship had been introduced by his Mother Jezebel: Beyond the Impiety of Jeroboam.

*And provoked to anger the LORD God of Israel, according to all that his father had done.]* Taking no Warning by the Hand of God against his Father, which was very remarkable; nor believing the dreadful Threatnings of Elijah against his Mother, and their whole Family.







4

Clark & Pine Scul.

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C O M M E N T A R Y  
U P O N T H E  
S E C O N D B O O K  
O F T H E  
K I N G S.

C H A P. I.

Verse 1. **W**HEN Moab rebelled against Israel, after the death of Abab.] They payed them no more Tribute, but utterly disclaimed their Authority over them; which they had owned ever since the Days of David, 2 Sam. xiii. 2. Whereas Edom (which it seems in the Division of the Kingdom, fell to Judah, as Moab did to Israel) continued still under the Dominion of the King of Judah, 1 Kings xxii. 47.

Ver. 2. And Abaziah fell down through a lattis in his upper chamber that was in Samaria,] By this Lattis, the Jews understand some Network that was in the Dining-room; which being decayed, and he leaning upon it, it fell down, and he together with it.

And was sick :] Was bruised, and perhaps fell into a Fever.

And he sent messengers, and said unto them, Go, enquire of Baal-zebub the god of Ekron, whether I shall recover of this disease.] Many think this god was called Baal Semin, the Lord of Heaven; whom the Jews, by way of Contempt, called Baal-zebub; i. e. the Lord of a Fly, as a god that was nothing worth; or rather, because his Temple was full of Flies: Whereas the Temple at Jerusalem, though so many Sacrifices were offered there daily, never had a Fly in it; as the Jews relate in Pirke Avoth. But it is not likely, the King of Israel would have called this god, for whom he had a great Reverence, by a contemptible Name; which signifies therefore no more than *Μυωδης μυαγρος, ἀπὸ γυῶ*, among the Greeks, which were the Titles of Jupiter and Hercules; because they were thought to free their Countries from Flies, with which the Ekronites were pestered, lying in a moist, and hot Soil, near to the Ocean. Theodoret, Procopius, and others, think they worshipped this god in the image of a Fly: But the latter of them doubts whether it was the Name of a Daemon, or of an old Woman canonized for a goddess. And after all, Mr Selden thinks the Reason of this Name cannot be found.

N n n

But



But the most probable Conjecture is, that he was so called from the Cure of a contagious Disease. For *Pliny* tells us, that there being a great Pestilence in *Africa*, which was brought among them by a Multitude of Flies, it was extinguished by the killing of them all after they had sacrificed to the god *Achore*. He should have said, the god worshipped at *Ekron*; from whence that Word *Achore* plainly came. *Lib. 10. Nat. Hist. Cap. 27.* And if this was the Original of the Name, it is no Wonder that *Abaziah* sent to enquire of him about his Sickness, since he was thought so powerful, as to cure the Pestilence.

Ver. 3. *But the Angel of the LORD said to Elijah the Tishbite, Arise, go up to meet the messengers of the king of Samaria, and say unto them, Is it not because there is not a God in Israel, that ye go to enquire of Baal-zebub the god of Ekron?*] There are two Negatives in the Hebrew Text, which increase the Sense, *Is it not because there is no God, none in Israel?* That is do you not plainly declare, that you think there is no God, none at all, in *Israel*? That he knows nothing, nor can do any thing? Which makes you send to *Ekron*, as if there was a more knowing, and mighty, if not the only God there.

Ver. 4. *And now therefore, thus saith the LORD, Thou shalt not come down from the bed, on which thou art gone up, but shalt surely die. And Elijah departed.*] Unto Mount Carmel, it is very probable: For he was presently after this sitting on the Top of a Hill, ver. 9.

Ver. 5. *And when the messengers turned back unto him, he said, Why are ye now come back?*] He knew by their speedy Return, that they had not executed his Command, and asked the Reason.

Ver. 6. *And they said unto him, There came up a man to meet us, and said unto us, Go, turn back unto the king that sent you, and say unto him, Thus saith the LORD, Is it not because there is not a God in Israel, that thou sendest to enquire of Baal-zebub the god of Ekron? Therefore thou shalt not come down from the bed, on which thou art gone up, but shalt surely die.*] *Elijah* was a Man of such a venerable Presence, and spake to them with such Authority, in the Name of the LORD, that they were over-awed thereby to obey him, rather than the King.

Ver. 7. *And he said unto them, What manner of man was he that came to meet you, and told you these words?*] He was not so angry at them for not obeying him, as desirous to know who he was that was so presumptuous as to stop their Journey.

Ver. 8. *And they answered him, He was an hairy man, and girt with a girdle of leather about his loins: And he said, It is Elijah the Tishbite.*] Some think he is said to be an hairy man, because he had long Hair on his Head and his Beard, like the Greek Philosophers: But it is more probable, it was because he was clad with an hairy Garment, which the Prophets were wont to use, *Isaiah xx. 2. Zachar. xiii. 4. St Matthew iii. 4.* And indeed the leathern Girdle shews what kind of Garment he wore. See *Dr Hammond* upon the Place last mentioned, *Annot. d.* This was the simplest, and most ancient Garment,

and therefore the old Heroes are said to have been cloathed in the Skins of Lions, or Tigers, or Bears, &c. And perhaps, by this rude Habit the Prophets expressed their great Grief for the sad Condition the *Israelites* were in, when they came to call them to Repentance.

Ver. 9. *Then the king sent unto him a captain of fifty with his fifty: and he went up unto him*] Not to the Place where he was, but so near that he might hear him deliver his Message.

(*And behold he sat upon the top of an hill*) and he spake unto him, *Thou man of God, the king hath said, Come down.*] Sent him with an Order, to command him to come down to him. But the Prophet thought he did but mock him, when he called him a man of God, as appears by the Punishment he inflicted on him. For it is as if he had said, Thou that callest thyself a Man of God, come down, or I will fetch thee. He would not be at the Pains to go to the Top of the Hill; but thought it sufficient to require him, in the King's Name, to come down, and surrender himself into his Hands.

Ver. 10. *And Elijah answered and said unto the captain of fifty, If I be a man of God, then let fire come down from heaven, and consume thee and thy fifty. And there came down fire from heaven, and consumed him and his fifty.*] If I be a Man of God, as thou sayest, but dost not think, then I am not bound to obey the King, but God, (as *Abarbinel* glosses upon these Words) nor am I subject to his Power, but unto God's; who will make thee know that he judges in the Earth. And immediately he and his Men were consumed with Lightning, according to *Elijah's* Word. Who chose to destroy them by Fire from Heaven (as he goes on) because he had at Mount Carmel called for Fire to consume the Sacrifice. Which Miracle they slighting, and coming now in a proud manner to carry him by Force to *Samaria* (where he knew *Jezabel* would put him to Death) he called for Fire to consume them.

Ver. 11. *Again also he sent unto him another captain of fifty, with his fifty; and he answered and said unto him, O man of God, thus hath the king said, Come down quickly.*] This Man was more insolent than the former, charging the Prophet to obey without Delay, and not make him stay; or think to dally with him. And by the following Words, it appears, this was the Voice of the whole Company.

Ver. 12. *And Elijah answered and said unto them, If I be a man of God, let fire come down from heaven, and consume thee, and thy fifty. And the fire of God came down from heaven, and consumed him and his fifty.*] He knew that Evil was determined against him by *Abaziah*, and therefore defended himself, in this manner, from his Cruelty; that he might be afraid to meddle with him, when he saw the Divine Vengeance so terrible against those that came to apprehend him.

Ver. 13. *And he sent again a captain of the third fifty, with his fifty; And the third captain went up, and came and fell on his knees before Elijah, and besought him, and said unto him, O man of God, I pray thee let my life, and the life of these fifty thy servants, be precious in thy sight.*] He



humbly intreated him, on his bended Knees, to spare his Life, and the Lives of those that accompanied him, who did not come willingly, much less of their own Accord: But were commanded by their Lord and Master to make known his Pleasure to him.

Ver. 14. *And behold, there came fire from heaven, and burnt up the two captains of the former fifties, with their fifties: therefore let my life now be precious in thy sight.*] He was sensible of the Hand of God against those that came with such a Command before, and acknowledges he was at *Elijah's* Mercy; but hoped he would take Compassion upon him, since he owned him really to be a Man of God, and believed his Power; as appeared by his falling down most reverently before him, and beseeching his Pity, and calling those with him *his Servants*.

Ver. 15. *And the angel of the LORD said unto Elijah, Go down with him, and be not afraid of him. And he arose and went down with him unto the king.*] This is a great Instance of the Prophet's Faith and Obedience to God; who he trusted would protect him from the Wrath of the King, and the Malice of *Jezabel*. Of whom he had great Reason to be afraid, having ordered the Prophets of *Baal* to be slain, and now sent the King an unwelcome Message, and done terrible Execution upon two of his Captains and their Companies. The first of which made him fly the Country (1 Kings xix. 3.) *Jezabel* threatening his Destruction; and had constrained him to conceal himself for a long Time, and not come to *Samaria*: Which was the Reason, as *Abarbinel* observes, that we hear nothing of him in the War of *Ben-hadad* against *Israel*, (1 Kings xx.) nor in the War of *Abab* against *Ben-hadad*, Chap. xxii. But now having a Command from God for it, as he had in the Case of *Naboth*, he boldly goes to the King, and confirms with his own Mouth, that ungrateful Truth, which he had already told him by his Messengers.

Ver. 16. *And he said unto him, Thus saith the LORD, forasmuch as thou hast sent messengers to enquire of Baal-zebub the god of Ekron, (is it not because there is no God in Israel, to enquire of his word?) therefore thou shalt not come down from off that bed on which thou art gone up, but shalt surely die.*] There was more Discourse passed between them, no doubt, than this: But this was the Conclusion of all, that the Sentence which God had pronounced against him, was irreverfible; and therefore he should not think of living much longer, but make use of the Time remaining, to repent of his Sins.

Ver. 17. *So he died, according to the word of the LORD, which Elijah had spoken:*] It is likely he told him the very Day, when he should die.

*And Jeroboam reigned in his stead, in the second year of Jehoram the son of Jehoshaphat king of Judah: because he had no son.*] Therefore this Brother of his succeeded him. Who began to govern in this second Year of *Jehoshaphat's* Son; but was King before (xii. 1.) only very young, and as some of the *Jews* think, under the Care of *Jehoshaphat*. But *Kimchi* seems to have better reconciled this seeming Difference, That *Jeho-*

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*shaphat* declared his Son *Jehoram* King while he lived, and he reigned with him seven Years. The Occasion of which is intimated in 2 Chron. xx. 3. *he gave the kingdom to Jehoram, because he was the first-born*, and gave Gifts to the rest of his Sons. Who being many, began to strive about the Succession to the Kingdom: Which belonging to the first-born, *Jehoshaphat*, to quiet them all, declared *Jehoram* King together with himself, and he reigned with him seven Years. When it is said therefore that *Abab's* *Jehoram* reigned in the second Year of *Jehoshaphat's* Son *Jehoram*, the Meaning is, the second Year that he reigned with his Father *Jehoshaphat*; who was then living.

Ver. 18. *Now the rest of the acts of Abaziah which he did, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah?*] They were but few, because he reigned a very short Time; but yet, according to Custom, they were recorded in a publick Register. Of which see on 1 Kings xi. 41.

## C H A P. II.

Verse 1. **A**ND it came to pass, when the LORD would take up *Elijah* into heaven by a whirlwind;] By a mighty Sound of Wind which the Angels raised, who came to fetch him: Of which Translation he himself had some Notice, by the Spirit of Prophecy.

*That Elijah went with Elisha from Gilgal.*] Unto this Place he retired before his Assumption to Heaven, it having been (as *Abarbinel* discourses) a Place of great Holiness; where the *Israelites* made their first Encampment, after they entered the Land of *Canaan*; and where *Joshua* had set up twelve Stones, taken out of *Jordan*, in Memory of their miraculous Passage over that River. Here also *Joshua* circumcised the *Israelites*, and kept the first Passover, and set up the Tabernacle, and the Ark of the Covenant, which remained here a long Time.

Ver. 2. *And Elijah said unto Elisha, Tarry here, I pray thee: for the LORD hath sent me to Beth-el.*] Another Place in ancient Time very holy, God appearing here to *Jacob* more than once, Gen. xxviii. 19. xxxv. 6, 9. This *Elijah* said to try *Elisha*; for he did not intend to conceal his Assumption into Heaven, and to have no Witnesses of it. His Humility indeed was great, but it was not fit to obscure the Glory of God, which herein miraculously appeared.

*And Elisha said unto him, As the LORD liveth, and as thy soul liveth, I will not leave thee: So they two went down to Beth-el.*] They were not wont anciently to swear by the Name of God (out of the Reverence they bare to him) but by some lesser Thing which depended on it; as *Joseph* did by the life of *Pharaoh*; that is, as true as that *Pharaoh* lives. And *Elisha* puts both here together, as sure as God liveth, and thou livest, I will not leave thee. See *Grotius De Jure Belli & Pacis*, Lib. 2. Cap. 13. N. 2.

Ver. 3. *And the sons of the prophets that were at Beth-el, came forth to Elisha,*] In these very corrupt Times, and in that Place where the Golden Calves were worshipped, God did not wholly forsake the *Israelites*; but continued the



Schools of the Prophets among them. For by the *Sons of the Prophets* are meant the Scholars of the Prophets, whom they educated, and trained up in Religion and Piety: And God, by Degrees, bestowed on some of them the Spirit of Prophecy. This was a great Testimony of God's Love to an Apostate People; among whom he left Prophets to recover them from their Idolatry. For even in the chief Place of Impiety (which was *Beth-el*) they were not wanting. And it is still more remarkable, that Prophets of greater Excellency for their Miracles were continued in *Israel* than were in *Judah*; because they needed them more, to turn their hard Hearts from the Worship of Idols; and to support the pious Persons that remained among them, and preserve them from deserting their Religion. For it seems to me very probable, that these *Sons of the Prophets* were such Ministers to the Prophets, as the Evangelists were to the Apostles: Whom the Prophets sent to publish their Prophecies and Instructions to the People, where they could not go themselves. And perhaps they taught them the Law of God, and explained it to them; of which there was great need in those idolatrous Times.

*And said unto him, Knowest thou that the LORD will take away thy master from thy head to day?*] It was revealed to some of them by God, and they told it to the rest of the Company of the Prophets. Who allude to their manner of sitting in their School, when they saw God would take away *Elijah* from his head: That is, deprive him of his Instructions. For, it is well known that the Scholars sat below at their Master's Feet, and the Master above over their Head, when they taught them.

*And he said, Yea, I know it, hold you your peace.*] Say no more of it: I would not be disturbed with the Thoughts of it. Or, let not my Master know, that I understand it.

Ver. 4. *And Elijah said unto Elisha, Tarry here, I pray thee:*] He doth not lay his Commands upon him (as he did unto a former Servant, 1 Kings xix. 3.) but only intreats him, and in a more tender manner than he did before, to accompany him no further.

*For the LORD hath sent me to Jericho.*] Another remarkable Place, as *Abarbinel* observes, to which he went: That as *Moses*, when he turned his Face towards this Place (*Deut. xxxiv. 1.*) departed this Life; so this should be the last Place wherein *Elijah* would remain, before he left the World. A Place also famous for many Miracles done there.

*And he said, As the LORD liveth, and as thy soul liveth, I will not leave thee. So they came to Jericho.*] He hoped for some great Blessing from him, when he was carried up to Heaven; and therefore continued firm in his Resolution, to attend that wonderful Change.

Ver. 5. *And the sons of the prophets that were at Jericho, came to Elisha, and said unto him, Knowest thou that the LORD will take away thy master from thy head to day? and he said, Yea, I know it, hold you your peace.*] Here was another School, where the same Holy Spirit revealed the Mind of God to them; as it had done at *Beth-el*. And it is a probable Opinion of

*Kimchi*, who affirms there were the like Schools in other Cities of *Israel*.

Ver. 6. *And Elijah said unto him, Tarry here, I pray thee, for the LORD had sent me unto Jordan.*] Another Place, where God had wrought great Wonders. Not far from which, as *Kimchi* notes, the great Prophet *Moses* died; and therefore God intended to translate *Elijah* near to this Place.

*And he said, As the LORD liveth, and as thy soul liveth, I will not leave thee. And they two went on.*] From *Jericho*, to the River *Jordan*.

Ver. 7. *And fifty men of the sons of the prophets went, and stood to view afar off:*] They were confident the Time of his Assumption drew near, and were very desirous, if it were possible, to see the manner of it: But were not admitted to accompany him to the Place, where he was taken up to Heaven, as *Elisha* did; for they took this View at *Jericho*, ver. 15.

*And they two stood by Jordan.*] The rest being forbidden, I suppose, to go thither with him.

Ver. 8. *And Elijah took his mantle, and wrapt it together,*] This Mantle of his is mentioned five times in these Books, thrice in this Chapter, and twice in 1 Kings xix. 13, 19. In all which Places it is called *Adareth*: Which is a Word signifying a Royal Robe, as well as a Prophetical, *Jonah* iii. 6. The LXX in all the five Places now mentioned, translate it *μνλωτι*, which properly signifies the Prophetical Mantle to be made of Lamb-skin: Being an upper Garment thrown over the Shoulders, and some think coming down to the Heels.

*And smote the waters, and they were divided hither and thither, so that they two went over on dry ground.*] God made a dry Path in the middle of the River, whose Waters stood on each Side of it.

Ver. 9. *And it came to pass when they were gone over, that Elijah said unto Elisha, Ask what I shall do for thee, before I be taken from thee. And Elisha said, Let I pray thee, a double portion of thy spirit be upon me.*] They are much mistaken, who imagine he begg'd as much more of the Spirit as *Elijah* had; for that had been very arrogant. He only desired to have such a Portion of it, as the first-born in a Family had of his Father's Estate. That is, as much more of his Spirit, as any of the rest of the Sons of the Prophets: For the Portion of the first-born was double to that of the rest of the Children. In short, he did not desire to excel his Master, but his School-fellows. See *P. Fagius* upon *Deut. xxi. 17.*

Ver. 10. *And he said, Thou hast asked a hard thing:*] Such Gifts were rarely bestowed.

*Nevertheless, if thou see me when I am taken from thee, it shall be so unto thee; but if not, it shall not be so.*] Mark, this is a Sign whether thou shalt have what thou desirest, or not.

Ver. 11. *And it came to pass, as they still went on, and talked,*] Of the happy State, it is likely, to which *Elijah* was going.

*That behold, there appeared a chariot of fire, and horses of fire, and parted them both asunder, and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven.*] Angels appeared before them, in the Form of a bright Chariot and Horses, running towards them upon the Ground; which coming be-



tween them, separated them one from the other. For *Elijah* mounted the Chariot, and in a great Gust of Wind governed by Angels, was transported into Heaven. That is, said *Abarbinel*, into the Air: For he being a Stranger to Christianity, could not conceive how an Earthly Body could live among the Cœlestial Inhabitants; and therefore, according to the gross Imaginations of the *Jews*, imagines he is still upon the Earth, in the Garden of *Eden*. But these are ignorant Conceits. The plain Sense is, that his Body being transformed in his Passage towards Heaven, he was carried up to live among the Angels.

The Heathens themselves did not disbelieve such things: As appears by the Story of *Ægynympha*, who was made immortal by *Jupiter*; and of *Dryope* by the *Hamadryades*: And *Bacchus* assured *Cadmus*, that by the Help of *Mars* he should live for ever in the Isles of the Blessed, whither they said *Alcumene* was snatched up, by *Mercury*, at the Command of *Jupiter*, &c. See *Dan. Huetius* in his *Alnetane Questions*, Lib. 2. Cap. 12. N. 30.

Ver. 12. And *Elisha* saw it, and he cried, My father, my father,] So they called their Masters and Instructors.

The chariots of Israel, and the horsemen thereof.] And he alludes to what he beheld; and very fitly compared *Elijah* to Chariots and Horsemen, which the *Israelites* wanted in their Armies; but he was instead of them by his Counsels and Prayers; whereby they might have obtained great Victories, if they would have been obedient to his Word.

And he saw him no more: and he took hold of his own clothes, and rent them in two pieces.] To express his Sorrow for so great a Loss.

Ver. 13. And he took up also the mantle of *Elijah* that fell from him,] This dropped from him as he went up to Heaven: In token of the Spirit that should be given to *Elisha*, according to his Promise.

And went back, and stood by the bank of *Jordan*:] Whose Waters were come together again, after he and *Elijah* got over.

Ver. 14. And he took the mantle of *Elijah* that fell from him, and said, Where is the LORD God of *Elijah*?] That is, let him shew his Presence with me, and his Power, as he did with *Elijah*. But we do not translate these last Words exactly, two Words being left out; viz. *Aph-bu*, which the LXX put into one, ἀφω, of which I know not the Sense. And the *Chaldee* translate it, receive my petition; without any Reason; whose Words carrying in them nothing of that Signification. The best Account of them is that which I meet with in a short Dissertation by *Job. Frischmuthus*, De Orig. & Prosapia *Eliæ*. Where he observes, that *Elisha* having asked this Question, Where is the LORD God of *Elijah*? answers himself in these Words, *Aph-bu*, etiam ille adhuc super est; yea, he is yet in being. Thus *Abarbinel* expresses the Sense. Though *Elijah* be not here, yet his God is. The Servant is wanting, but not the LORD. The blessed God is still present, and will supply his Place.

And when he also had smote the waters, they parted hither and thither: And *Elisha* went over.] Just as *Elijah* had done a little before, ver. 8.

Ver. 15. And when the sons of the prophets which were to view at *Jericho*, saw him, they said, The spirit of *Elijah* doth rest on *Elisha*. And they came to meet him, and bowed themselves down to the ground before him:] In token of their Reverence to him, as the Father of the Prophets.

Ver. 16. And they said unto him, Behold now, there are with us fifty strong men,] Fit to undertake such an Expedition as they propose.

Let them go, we pray thee, and seek thy master: lest peradventure the spirit of the LORD hath taken him up, and cast him upon some mountain, or into some valley.] They had but an imperfect Notice of what God intended, when they asked *Elisha*, if he knew the LORD would take his Master from him. For they imagined he might not be quite taken away; but only for a Time: Or, that if his Spirit were taken into Heaven, his Body might possibly be thrown upon some of the neighbouring Mountains or Valleys.

And he said, Ye shall not send.] For he knew it would be to no Purpose.

Ver. 17. And when they urged him till he was ashamed, he said, Send.] He was afraid they should think he wanted Love to his Master; or, was so ambitious to enjoy his Place, and Authority, that he was loth he should be found alive.

And they sought him three days, but found him not.] In that Time they searched every Place, where they thought it likely he might be cast.

Ver. 18. And when they came again to him (for he tarried at *Jericho*) he said unto them, Did not I say unto you, Go not? By this he settled his Authority, in that he foretold them their Labour would be lost.

Ver. 19. And the men of the city said unto *Elisha*, Behold, the situation of this city is pleasant, as my lord seeth: but the water is naught, and the ground barren.] Things did not thrive in that Soil; but the People, and the Cattle miscarried, and the Fruit fell off from the Trees; as the Margin translates it. Which Curse, *Abarbinel* thinks, had been upon this Place, ever since the Time of *Joshua*.

Ver. 20. And he said, Bring me a new cruse, and put salt therein. And they brought it to him.] He would have a new Cruse, that had never been used; and brought by them, together with the Salt, that there might be no Suspicion of Fraud, (as *Abarbinel* observes) nor the Virtue ascribed to any thing that was in the Cruse before, but meerly to the Power of God. The *Jews* also in *Michilta* say, that his putting Salt into it, made this a Miracle in a Miracle: For it makes Water less potable, and Ground more barren.

Ver. 21. And he went forth unto the spring of the waters, and cast the salt in there, and said, Thus saith the LORD, I have healed these waters: there shall not be from thence any more death, or barren land.] He wrought the Miracle at *Jordan*, as the fore-named Author observes, for his own sake; that he might make an Experiment, whether the Divine Influence which was upon *Elijah* was derived unto him. But this at *Jericho* he wrought for the sake of the Sons of the Prophets, who dwelt there; that they might know the Hand of the LORD was with him.

Ver. 22.



Ver. 22. *So the waters were healed unto this day, according to the saying of Elisha, which he spake.*] By this the People of the City (who befought this Favour from him, ver. 19.) saw that he was a Man of God, to whom they owed Obedience.

Ver. 23. *And he went up from thence to Beth-el.*] That he might visit the Sons of the Prophets who were in that City, and comfort them for the Loss of *Elijah*; by letting them see the Spirit of God was upon him. It is very properly said, he *went up* thither, because it stood upon an Hill; and there was an Ascent from *Jericho* thither (*Josh. viii. 3, 17.*) though *Elijah* and he, going another Way, are said to go down to *Beth-el*, ver. 2.

*And as he was going up by the way, there came forth little children out of the city,*] The Word *Naarim* signifies grown Youth, as well as little Children. For *Isaac*, when he was twenty-eight Years old, is called *Naar*, *Gen. xxii. 5, 12.* And *Joseph*, when he was thirty, *xli. 12.* and *Rehoboam*, when he was forty, *2 Chron. xiii. 7.* And this is to be understood here, of adult Persons; who had a Hatred to the Prophet.

*And mocked him,*] By the Instigation of their Parents, or of *Baal's* Priests (as they will have it, who take them for meer Children) who stirred them up, and taught them to jeer at his bald Pate, and so laughed at the Ascension of *Elijah*.

*And said unto him, Go up thou bald head, go up thou bald head.*] The Repetition of these Words, expresses their Earnestness and Vehemence in their Contempt of him. For as Hair was always accounted a singular Ornament, so Baldness was disgraceful. Insomuch that *Cæsar*, as *Bochartus* hath observed, could not bear with those who jeered him upon this Account; and thought it the highest Honour the Senate did him, in decreeing he should always appear with a Wreath of Laurel upon his Head.

When they call upon *Elisha* to go up, they flouted, as *Abarbinel* thinks, at the Ascension of *Elijah* to Heaven; the News of which had been brought thither, and reported by the Prophets of that Place. Which the Idolaters laughed at, and bad *Elisha* go up to Heaven also; that they might not be troubled with him. This I find also the Authors of the Questions and Answers, *ad Orthodoxo*, understands these Words: Which were spoken *πρὸς διασυρμὸν τῆς τῷ Ἁλίῳ ἀναλήψεως*, to reproach the Assumption of *Elijah*: As if they had said, *λαμβάνετω καὶ σε πνεῦμα*, *Let the Spirit take thee also*, and cast thee upon some inaccessible Mountain; that we may be rid of thee, as we are of him. *Respons. 80.*

Ver. 24. *And he turned back, and looked upon them, and cursed them in the name of the LORD.*] This Contempt of him, not as a Man meerly, but as a Prophet, provoked the Anger of God; who moved *Elisha* to lay a Curse upon them, and punish them, as *Moses* did *Korah*, *Dathan*, and *Abiram*; and *St Peter* did *Ananias*, and *Sapphira*.

*And there came two she-bears out of the wood,*] Who it is likely had been robbed of their Whelps: Which made them the more fierce and outrageous.

*And tare forty and two children of them.*] This was done by an extraordinary Direction

of God; who moved the Bears at that Moment to come out of the Wood, when *Elisha* pronounced the Curse; and to make such a great Havock among them, when two or three would have satisfied their Hunger.

Ver. 25. *And he went from thence to mount Carmel,*] Where it is probable he had many Disciples: Among whom he intended to be a while retired.

*And from thence he returned to Samaria.*] To testify against their Idolatry. And it is highly probable, there was a College of Prophets even in *Samaria*, as there was in *Beth-el*, and *Jericho*; whom he went to encourage.

### C H A P. III.

Verse 1. **N**OW *Jehoram* the son of *Abab* began to reign over *Israel* in *Samaria*, the eighteenth year of *Jehoshaphat* king of *Judah*, and reigned twelve Years.] *Ahaziah* his Brother reigned two Years, and began his Reign in the seventeenth Year of *Jehoshaphat* (*1 Kings xxii. 51.*) That is, part of the seventeenth Year, and part of the eighteenth, which was accounted for two Years. In the latter End of which *Jehoram* his Brother began to reign: When *Jehoram*, the Son of *Jehoshaphat*, had two Years reigned with his Father. See i. 17.

Ver. 2. *And he wrought evil in the sight of the LORD, but not like his father, and like his mother; for he put away the image of Baal which his father had made.*] He did not break it in pieces, as he would have done if he had heartily hated it, but only put it away out of the Temple; being afraid, lest the Judgments of God should fall upon him, as they had done upon his Father. And the King of *Moab* being now in Rebellion against him, *Jehoshaphat* perhaps refused to help him, whilst he was a Worshipper of *Baal*. It is much that his Mother, who had brought this Worship with her from the *Zidonians*, should suffer him to remove this Image; but she was a little daunted perhaps at their many Disasters which had befallen their Family; and was contented with worshipping *Baal* in private.

Ver. 3. *Nevertheless, he cleaved unto the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin; he departed not therefrom.*] It was easier to remove the Image of *Baal*, than to put away the Calves; for that was new, but the other had been of long standing; and the most likely Course they could think of, to maintain the Division of the two Kingdoms.

Ver. 4. *And Mesha king of Moab was a sheep-master,*] The Riches not only of private Men, but also of Kings, in ancient Time consisted much in Sheep, and Cattle: Which, I have observed before, they looked after themselves: And their Sons kept their Sheep, as *Bochartus* shews in his *Hieroicoicon*, P. 1. Lib. 2. Cap. 44. And thus the greatest part of the World lived, during the space of near four Thousand Years. Which did not hinder them from being, at the same Time, a brave and warlike People, as appears by the ancient *Romans*, who were thus bred; and subdued all *Italy*, and at last made themselves Masters of the World. For this sort of Life



Life was the Cause of their great Strength, making their Bodies robust, and hardned to Labour, and accustomed to a severe Discipline. There cannot be a greater Instance of this, than we have in *Cato the Censor*; who passed through all the great Offices of the Republick of *Rome*, had governed Provinces, commanded Armies, was a great Orator, Lawyer, and Politician; who did not disdain to write a Treatise concerning all the Ways that are necessary for the improving Lands, and how Stables and Houses were to be built for several sorts of Cattle, and how Presses were to be made for Wine and Oil, &c. Infomuch that any one may see he was perfectly acquainted with Country Business and that he did not write for Ostentation, but for the Use and Service of Mankind.

And rendered to the king of Israel an hundred thousand lambs, and an hundred thousand rams, with the wool.] This was a prodigious Number, and being rendred unshorn, made them more valuable. But we are to consider that these Countries abounded with Sheep; infomuch that *Solomon* offered an hundred and twenty thousand at the Dedication of the Temple, 2 *Chron.* vii. 5. and the *Reubenites* drove from the *Hagarens* an hundred and fifty thousand, 1 *Chron.* v. 7. For they frequently brought forth two at a Time, and sometimes twice a Year, as that great Man *Bochartus* shews in the same Book, Cap. 46. and produces a famous Place in *Pliny*, which shews that this was the most ancient Tribute. For he saith in the *Censorian Tables*, all the Rents of the People are called *Pastures*, *quia diu hoc solum vestigal fuerat*, Lib. 18. Nat. Hist. Cap. 3. But *Ludolphus* hath observed two things for the illustrating this History of the King of *Moab*, which seem to be very considerable. First, That this was not Annual Tribute, but Satisfaction for Damages which the *Israelites* had sustained in the War with them, or by their Revolt from them, as the *LXX* understand it. And then the Word *Ajil* should not be translated a *Ram*, but a *Weather*: For one *Ram* will serve a great many *Sheep*, Lib. 1. Comment. in *Histor. Æthiop.* Cap. 3. N. 30.

Ver. 5. And it came to pass when *Abab* was dead, that the king of *Moab* rebelled against the king of *Israel*.] As was said before, Chap. i. 1. and here again repeated, only to introduce the following History.

Ver. 6. And king *Jehoram* went out of *Samaria* the same time, and numbered all *Israel*.] As soon as he was settled in his Kingdom, his first Business was to raise an Army to reduce *Moab* to Obedience.

Ver. 7. And he went] After his Army was raised, he went out of *Samaria*.

And sent to *Jehoshaphat* the king of *Judah*, saying, The king of *Moab* hath rebelled against me: wilt thou go with me against *Moab* to battle? And he said, I will go up: I am as thou art, my people as thy people, and my horses as thy horses.] He returned the very same Answer to him which he had given to *Abab* his Father, when he desired his Assistance against *Syria*, 1 *Kings* xxii. 4. wherein he had been so unsuccessful, that it should have made him more cautious how he joined with his Son; especially since he seemed

to have been afraid to have to do with his Brother *Abaziah*, 1 *Kings* xxii. 49. But *Jehoram* having reformed some things (ver. 2.) it made him perhaps have a better Opinion of him; and by shewing Kindness to him, he might hope to persuade him to proceed further. And besides, the *Moabites* had lately invaded his Country, 2 *Chron.* xx. 1, 10. which might move him to embrace an Opportunity to chastise them for it.

Ver. 8. And he said, Which way shall we go up?] *Jehoshaphat* having agreed to join with him, it is likely the King of *Israel* asked this Question, and *Jehoshaphat* made the following Answer.

And he answered, the way through the wilderness of *Edom*.] Which he chose, because he would have the Assistance of the *Edomites*, who were his Tributaries. And it is probable *Moab* was but weakly fortified on that side.

Ver. 9. So the king of *Israel* went, and the king of *Judah*, and the king of *Edom*.] There was no King at this Time in *Edom*, as we read in the last Chapter of the foregoing Book, ver. 47. but a Viceroy appointed by the King of *Judah*. Yet such are called Kings, 1 *Kings* xx. 1. See *Grotius*. And *Jehoshaphat*, I suppose, now required him with his People, to help him in this War.

And they fetcht a compass of seven days journey:] That they might come upon the Backs of the *Moabites*: Where they did not expect them.

And there was no water for the host, and for the cattle that followed them.] That drew their Carriages. For either there was a great Drought in those Parts; or they had mistaken their Way.

Ver. 10. And the king of *Israel* said, Alas! that the LORD hath called these three kings together, to deliver them into the hand of *Moab*.] He doth not cry to God for Help, but only bewail the Straits into which they were fallen: Which his own Guilt made him imagine God had contrived for their Destruction.

Ver. 11. And *Jehoshaphat* said, Is not there a Prophet of the LORD, that we may enquire by him?] This was spoken like a pious Man; but it was a Fault that he did not enquire before for Direction in this War; as he did in that with the *Syrians*, 1 *Kings* xxii. 5.

And one of the king of *Israel's* servants answered and said, Here is *Elisha* the son of *Shaphat*, which poured water on the hands of *Elijah*.] That is was his Servant, and ministred unto him.

Ver. 12. And *Jehoshaphat* said, The word of the LORD is with him.] For no doubt he had been informed how *Elijah* had chosen him to be his Successor; and how he attended him till he was taken up to Heaven; and what Wonders he had already done.

So the king of *Israel*, and *Jehoshaphat*, and the king of *Edom* went down to him.] It is uncertain whither they went. But it is very observable, First, How much they honoured the Prophet, for whom they did not send to come to them; but went to him. And Secondly, How desirous the Prophet was to do good, in that he followed the Camp into this Wilderness. For it is not likely they went back to *Samaria*



*Samaria* to wait on him (where the Story last left him, in the last Verse of the foregoing Chapter) which would have been a seven Days Journey; and the Army might in the mean Time have been lost. Besides, *ver. 16.* shews he was not far from them; and the Servant in the foregoing Verse speaks of him as present; saying, *Here is Elisba.*

*Ver. 13. And Elisba said unto the king of Israel; What have I to do with thee? Get thee to the prophets of thy father, and to the prophets of thy mother.]* He refuses with great Disdain to entertain any Discourse with him; and bids him confer with those who he knew could do him no Service.

*And the king of Israel said, Nay:]* That is, I will not consult them; but do thou give us Counsel how we may be brought out of this great Distress.

*For the L O R D hath called these three kings together, to deliver them into the hand of Moab.]* Though he refused to do any thing for his sake, yet he beseeches him to have Respect to the other two Kings, who must perish as well as he, if he did not help them.

*Ver. 14. And Elisba said, As the L O R D of hosts liveth, before whom I stand,]* It is observable, that the Sons of the Prophets are said to sit before their Masters the Prophets when they instructed them, (*iv. 3, 8.* and see the foregoing Chapter, *ver. 3.*) but the Prophets themselves stood before the LORD, their Master, when he sent them upon any Message. See *Corn. Bertram. de Rep. Jud. Cap. 16.*

*Surely, were it not that I regard the presence of Jehoshaphat the king of Judah, I would not look towards thee, nor see thee.]* He saith nothing of the King of *Edom*, who was a Dependant upon *Jehoshaphat*: Whose Piety he esteemed, and had some Respect to all that belonged to him.

*Ver. 15. But now bring me a minstrel.]* One that could play well upon an Instrument of Musick.

*And it came to pass when the minstrel played, that the hand of the L O R D came upon him.]* Every one knows that some sort of Musick wonderfully quiets and composes the Spirits, when they are disordered; and raises them when they are flat and heavy. And therefore holy Men did not neglect such Helps to make them so sedate and chearful, that they might be fit to receive Divine Inspirations. But it is likely he that played now to *Elisba* sung withal some Hymn in the Praises of God, and of his wonderful Works, whereby the Spirit of the Prophet was sweetly composed, which had been disturbed, perhaps more than was fit; by his Indignation at the King of *Israel*. And from hence we may conclude there were excellent Musicians in *Israel*, as well as in *Judah*, where *David* had settled Divine Musick in great Perfection. And it is very probable, what the Heathen boast of their *Muses*, was from hence derived.

*Then the hand of the L O R D came upon him.]* That is, God wrought in him; and he felt himself moved by a Divine Inspiration.

*Ver. 16. And he said, Thus saith the L O R D, make this valley full of ditches.]* This shews they were in a Place where the Army was encamped in a Valley, in which he ordered them to

be set at work, to dig large Ditches to hold Water enough for them all.

*Ver. 17. For thus saith the L O R D, Ye shall not see wind, neither shall ye see rain; yet that valley shall be filled with water, that ye may drink, both ye, and your cattle, and your beasts.]* The Words belonging to one of our Senses are frequently applied to another. As to *see Wind* is to feel it, or hear it. And the Meaning is, there should no Wind stir to blow up Clouds (as the South-wind commonly did) nor should they see any Rain fall; and yet they should have Plenty of Water in that Valley, for themselves, and all belonging to them. I suppose it fell upon the Mountains at a Distance from them, and came pouring down into the lower Ground.

*Ver. 18. And this is but a light thing in the sight of the L O R D: He will deliver the Moabites into your hand.]* Of which, I suppose, they had no Hope, being much dispirited for want of Water.

*Ver. 19. And ye shall smite every fenced city, and every choice city, and shall fell every good tree, and stop up all the wells of water, and mar every good piece of land with stones.]* Prophets were to be obeyed, when they commanded things contrary to a positive Precept, as some part of this was, see *Deut. xx. 19.* Which they had Power to dispense withal for a Time, though not always, so as to annul the Precept, as *Maimonides* expounds this Matter in his Preface to *Seder Zeraim*. But some think this Usage so severe, that they take the Prophet's Meaning to be no more than this; that God would give them such an intire Victory, that they might be able to do all this, if they pleased; and the *Moabites* were so ill Neighbours, that it is very likely they did this Execution upon them, *ver. 25.*

*Ver. 20. And it came to pass in the morning, when the meat-offering was offered,]* When the People of God were praying at *Jerusalem*, at the Time of the Morning Sacrifice, *Elisba* joined his Prayers with them for this Blessing.

*That behold, there came water by the way of Edom, and the country was filled with water.]* Whether it came from a sudden Collection of a vast Number of Clouds, which poured down Rain in abundance in the Land of *Edom*; or from some Rocks which God caused to gush out Water; it came by a miraculous Power, when there was no natural Cause to produce it.

*Ver. 21. And when all the Moabites heard that the kings were come up to fight against them, they gathered all that were able to put on armour, and upward, and stood in the border.]* Intending to defend themselves; but not to march out of their Country, to give the Enemy Battle.

*Ver. 22. And they rose up early in the morning,]* The next Morning, I suppose, after the Water filled the Valley.

*And the sun shone upon the water, and the Moabites saw the water on the other side as red as blood:]* On the East-side of their Country.

*Ver. 23. And they said, This is blood: the kings are surely slain, and they have smitten one another: now therefore, Moab, to the spoil.]* They knew there was no Water there, a few Days before, and that there had been no Rain; and therefore (the Sun shining directly in their Eyes, which made it look red) they concluded it could be nothing



nothing else but Blood. And what Blood could it be, but that of the three Kings Army, who had fallen out, by reason, perhaps, of their different Religion; or vexed at the Straits they had brought one another into? And the *Moabites* easily believing what they wished, imagined they had nothing to do, but to go and gather Spoil, and not to fight at all.

Ver. 24. *And when they came to the camp of Israel, the Israelites rose up and smote the Moabites, so that they fled before them:]* They entirely routed and dispersed them.

But they went forward, smiting the *Moabites*, even in their country.] But they did not content themselves with this Victory; but pursued them so close that they got into their Country with them, and there made a greater Havock of them.

Ver. 25. *And they beat down the cities, and on every good piece of land cast every man his stone, and filled it, and they stopped all the wells of water, and felled all the good trees:]* According to the Permission given them by the Prophet (ver. 19.) intending, I suppose, to depopulate the whole Country.

Only in *Kir-harosheth* left they the stones thereof:] They left no Walls standing, but only these of the Royal City; which was exceeding strong. See *Isaiah* xvi. 7, 11.

Howbeit the slingers went about it, and smote it.] They raised such Batteries against it, that they drove them who defended it from the Wall; and made great Breaches in it.

Ver. 26. *And when the king of Moab saw the battle was too sore for him,]* That he was not able to defend the Place any longer.

He took with him seven hundred men that drew swords, to break through even unto the king of *Edom*: but they could not.] He made a Sally with seven hundred stout Men upon the Quarters of the King of *Edom* (which it seems were the weakest) hoping to break through them, and escape. But they were repulsed, and forced to retreat.

Ver. 27. *Then he took his eldest son that should have reigned in his stead, and offered him for a burnt-offering upon the wall:]* Hereupon the King of *Moab* took his eldest Son and made him a Sacrifice before them all, as the last desperate Remedy; hoping thereby to obtain powerful Help from his God, through so precious a Sacrifice of the dearest thing he had unto him. For it is well known, not only by the Holy Scriptures, but Heathen Writers, that in great Distress they were wont to offer their own Children upon their Altars. *Eusebius* Lib. 5. *Prepar. Evangel.* and *Lactantius*, Lib. 1. *Div. Instit.* Cap. 21. mention several Nations who used these Sacrifices. And *Cæsar* Lib. 6. *De Bello Gallico*, saith of the *Gauls*, that when they were afflicted with grievous Diseases, or in Time of War, or great Danger, they either offered Men for Sacrifices, or vowed they would offer them. For they imagined God would not be appeased, *Nisi pro vita hominis reddatur vita hominis*, unless the Life of a Man was rendered for the Life of a Man.

*Abarbinel* indeed, thinks that he offered the eldest Son of the King of *Edom*, whom he took Prisoner in the late Sally. But it could not be said of him, that this Son was to reign in his stead; For the King of *Judah* made whom he

pleased his Deputy over *Edom*. And this would not have made the three Kings withdraw the Siege, but prosecute it with greater Fury. And *Abarbinel* acknowledges, that their wife Men in *Peskta* and the *Sanhedrin* understand it as I do: And that some of them think he offered him in Imitation of *Abraham*, to the God of *Israel*, hoping to move him to be favourable to him. Which no less Man than *Grotius* follows. And indeed it is highly probable, that this Custom of offering humane Sacrifices sprung from the offering of *Isaac*, from whence the *Moabites*, who were Neighbours to *Canaan*, learnt it.

And there was great indignation against *Israel*:] Or, as it may be translated, great repentance upon (or in, or among) *Israel*. That is, they were extream sorry and troubled at this barbarous Sacrifice, and wished they had not pushed on the War so far; which ended in such an horrid Action, which brought an *Odium* upon them.

And they departed from him, and returned to their own land.] Hereupon they raised the Siege, by common Consent, and returned home, for fear any such thing should be done again.

## C H A P. IV.

Ver. 1. *N*OW there cried a certain woman of the wives of the sons of the prophets unto *Elisha*, saying,] It is observed by *St Hierom*, that *Elijah* and *Elisha* had no Wives. *Et Virgines muli Filii Prophetarum*; and many of the Sons of the Prophets were Virgins: But it is plain by this Place that they were not all so; but had Liberty to marry if they pleased.

My husband is dead, and thou knowest that thy servant did fear the LORD:] Was a Worshipper of the true God, and not of *Baal* nor the *Calves*: Which was the Reason it is likely of his Poverty; such Men being discountenanced among the idolatrous *Israelites*.

And the creditor is come to take unto him my two sons, to be his bondsmen.] Because she was not able to pay his Debts: In which Case the *Hebrews* had such a Power over their Children, that they might sell them (being looked upon as their Goods) to pay what they owed; and the Creditor might force them to it. And *Huetius* thinks that from the *Jews* this Custom was propagated to the *Athenians*; and from them to the *Romans*. The *Hebrew Doctors* have a Fancy, that this Prophet was *Obadiab* (mentioned 1 *Kings* xviii. 3.) and that the Creditor was *Jehoram* the Son of *Ahab*. Which is utterly ungrounded.

Ver. 2. *And Elisha said unto her, What shall I do for thee? Tell me, what hast thou in the house?]* Toward the Discharge of thy Husband's Debt.

And she said, Thine handmaid hath not any thing in the house, save a pot of oil.] Which was a thing of great Use; both for the Service of God, and of Men.

Ver. 3. *And he said, Go borrow thee vessels abroad of all thy neighbours, even empty vessels, borrow not a few.]* As many as she could get, and not small Vessels.

Ver. 4. *And when thou art come in, thou shalt shut the door upon thee, and upon thy sons,]* That



none might come in to disturb her in what she was about.

*And shalt pour out]* Of the Pot of Oil which she had.

*Into all those vessels, and thou shalt set aside that which is full.]* And call for another that was empty.

Ver. 5. *So she went from him, and shut the door upon her sons, who brought the vessels to her, and she poured out.]* Believing she should by this means be relieved.

Ver. 6. *And it came to pass when the vessels were full, that she said unto her son,]* Who brought her the empty Vessels; for the other Son was employed in setting aside those that were full.

*Bring me yet a vessel.]* For she was confident the Pot of Oil would still afford more.

*And he said unto her, There is not a vessel more. And the oil stayed.]* When there was no Vessel to receive it.

Ver. 7. *Then she came and told the man of God : And he said, Go, sell the oil, and pay thy debt, and live thou and thy children upon the rest.]* We must first do Justice; and then expect God's Blessing upon the Provision we make for our selves and our Family.

Ver. 8. *And it fell out on a day, that Elisha passed to Shunem,]* A City in the Tribe of Issachar, *Josh. xix. 18.*

*Where was a great woman ;]* Who had a great Estate, and it is likely kept a great House.

*And she constrained him to eat bread.]* Was very importunate with him to take a Repast at her House, and prevailed with him to accept of her Kindness.

*And so it was, that as oft as he passed by, he turned in thither to eat bread.]* She made him so welcome, that he made no Scruple, when he had Occasion to go that Way, to step in there and refresh himself: Which it is likely she invited him to do.

Ver. 9. *And she said unto her husband, Behold now, I perceive]* By her frequent Conversation with him.

*That this is an holy man of God,]* Not only a Prophet; but a Person of great Sanctity.

*Which passeth by us continually.]* For Shunem was in his Way as he went from Carmel (which was not far from hence) to Beth-el and Jericho, and other Places of the Sons of the Prophets.

Ver. 10. *Let us make a little chamber, & I pray thee, on the wall,]* A private Room remote from the House, where he might retire; and without Noise or Disturbance give himself to Prayer, and Meditation, and follow his sacred Studies.

*And let us set up for him there a bed, and a table, and a stool, and a candlestick :]* Furnish it with all things necessary for a single Person.

*And it shall be that when he cometh, he shall turn in thither.]* Take up his Lodging there, if he think good.

Ver. 11. *And it fell out on a day that he came thither, and he turned into the chamber, and lay there.]* And it appears by the Story, that he became their constant Guest.

Ver. 12. *And he said to Gehazi his servant, Call this Shunammite. And when he called her, she stood before him.]* Waiting to know what he wanted. But he having been so kindly enter-

tained by her for some Time, sent for her to give her Thanks, and to desire to know what he should do for her.

Ver. 13. *And he said unto him, Say now unto her,]* He seems to me to have whispered to Gehazi, to ask her the following Question. Whereupon she withdrew, thinking he had some Business with him, before he could speak with her.

*Behold, thou hast been careful for us with all this care ;]* Been exceeding kind to us, in taking care we should want nothing.

*What is to be done for thee ?]* That is, wherein can I serve thee? For he was very desirous, as all good Men are, to be grateful.

*Wouldst thou be spoken for to the king, or to the captain of the host ?]* It seems the Prophet had a great Power at Court, since the late Victory over the Moabites. And therefore if she had any Suit to make to the King, he doubted not to effect it; or had any Grievance to complain of, which she suffered by the Soldiers, he offered to get it remedied.

*And she answered, I dwell among my own people.]* Whatsoever Vexation any might suffer by the Soldiers upon the Borders, she tells him she lived safely and quietly among her Friends and good Neighbours; being so free from Want that she needed not petition the King for any thing.

Ver. 14. *And he said, What is then to be done for her ?]* This Answer being returned to his Master by Gehazi, Elisha asked him, what he thought might be most welcome to her. Which he might easily know, going about the House and observing all things there, which Elisha did not, who lived retired.

*And Gehazi said, Verily she hath no child, and her husband is old.]* He knew Women were desirous above all things to have Children; which she neither had, nor was like to have, by reason of her Husband's Age.

Ver. 15. *And he said, Call her.]* This shews she withdrew presently, when he first sent for her, ver. 12, 13.

*And when he had called her, she stood in the door.]* Either out of Modesty, or Reverence; or being afraid to disturb him.

Ver. 16. *And he said, About this season, according to the time of life,]* The next Year, after thou hast gone the usual Time.

*Thou shalt embrace a son.]* From the Word *Habeketh*, which we translate *thou shalt embrace*, some of the Hebrew Doctors conjecture that this Son proved afterward the Prophet *Habakkuk*: Which is a meer Fancy, rejected by *Abarbinel* and others; who make account *Habakkuk* prophesied in the Time of *Manasseh* or *Josiah*.

*And she said, Nay, my lord, thou man of God, do not lie unto thy handmaid.]* Do not jest with me.

Ver. 17. *And the woman conceived, and bare a son at that time that Elisha said unto her, according to the time of life.]* It is likely he named the very Day when he should be born; and it fell out exactly as he had said.

Ver. 18. *And when the child was grown, it fell out on a day, that he went out to his father to the reapers.]* Either for Pleasure; or to enquire of his Health. This shews still the Truth of



of that which I have often observed, that great Men in ancient Times (for the Quality of his Wife shews this was no mean Person, *ver. 8.*) followed their Country Business themselves; looking after their Corn and their Cattle, and labouring with their own Hands for their Health, and the Increase of their Estates, by their Industry in their Improvement.

*Ver. 19. And he said unto his father, My head, my head.]* Either walking so far, or staying long in the Sun (which shone hot in Harvest Time) put him into a Fever, which grievously affected his Head.

*And he said to a lad, Carry him home to his mother.]* That she might look after him, and do what was proper for his Ease.

*Ver. 20. And when he had taken him, and brought him to his mother, he sat on her knees, 'till noon and then died.]* It seems he went out in the Morning to his Father, and was seized with such a sudden violent Pain, as in a few Hours killed him.

*Ver. 21. And she went up, and laid him upon the bed of the man of God,]* Hoping for Help by him, whose Master she had heard (no doubt) had restored a Child to Life.

*And shut the door, and went out.]* Kept it as private as she could, that her Husband might not know the Child was dead; which would have been a great Grief to him.

*Ver. 22. And she called to her husband, and said,]* By a Messenger which she sent to him.

*Send me now, I pray thee, one of the young men, and one of the asses, that I may run to the man of God, and come again quickly.]* So as not hinder his Business.

*Ver. 23. And he said, Wherefore wilt thou go to him to day? It is neither new moon, nor sabbath.]* It appears by this, that the Prophets were the publick Instructors of the People; and their Houses were a kind of School or Synagogue, unto which they resorted upon the Days here mentioned, to be taught their Duty, out of the Law of God, and to be resolved in their Doubts. And the Prophets accordingly were constantly in some certain Place upon these Days, to give the People their Instruction.

*And she said, It shall be well.]* In the Hebrew, it is Peace. That is, she prays him to believe that she went for no Hurt; but for his and her Benefit.

*Ver. 24. Then she saddled an ass, and said to her servant, Drive, and go forward; slack not thy riding for me, except I bid thee.]* She ordered him to make all the Haste he could, as fast as the Ass would go; without any Respect to her, unless she called to him to drive more softly.

*Ver. 25. So she went and came to the man of God to mount Carmel:]* This is a Place which he, and *Elijah* also, much frequented: Which makes it credible there was a School of the Prophets here; it being a Mountain full of Trees, which made it fit for sacred Exercises. As soon as *Elijah* was taken from him, *Elisha* fetched a Circuit by *Jericho* and *Beth-el*, to come hither; and from thence went to *Samaria*. For which no good Reason can be given, but that it was to visit the Places which his Master had frequented, and instruct those who studied there, as *Elijah* had been wont to do.

VOL. II.

*And it came to pass, when the man of God saw her afar off, he said to Gebazi his servant, Behold, yonder is that Shunamite:]* He was surprized to see her coming at an unusual Time.

*Ver. 26. Run now, I pray thee, to meet her,]* To shew his Respect to her.

*And say unto her, Is it well with thee? Is it well with thine husband? Is it well with the child?]* He bids him make particular Enquiry after all that were most dear to her.

*And she answered, It is well.]* Some translate it, *It shall be well.* But there is no need of that. For they were well in part; that is, she and her Husband. And she did not think fit to tell *Gebazi* all the Truth; but to deliver it to the Prophet himself.

*Ver. 27. And when she came to the man of God to the bill, she caught him by the feet:]* After the manner of a most humble Suppliant; resolving not to let him stir 'till he granted her Request.

*And Gebazi came near to thrust her away.]* Believing his Master did not expect such Abasement; especially from her, who had been so kind and friendly to them.

*And the man of God said, Let her alone, her soul is vexed in her:]* Do not disturb her; for she is too full of Grief already.

*And the LORD hath hid it from me,]* God hath not shewn him the Cause of it; that he might have prevented it.

*And hath not told me.]* The Prophets did not know all things, but only what God was pleased to impart unto them. See 2 Sam. vii. 3. For the Spirit was not in them after the manner of a supernatural Faculty, or infused Habit (as we speak) whereby they might act what, and when they pleased; *Moses* himself, the great Prophet, not being able to determine some things, 'till he had consulted the Divine Majesty, *Numb. xv. 13, 14.*

*Ver. 28. Then she said, Did I desire a son of my lord? did I not say, Do not deceive me?]* As much as to say, she was well satisfied without a Son; and did neither desire one, nor was forward to believe she should have one when freely promised: But to lose him after he was bestowed upon her, was an unspeakable Affliction to her.

*Ver. 29. And he said to Gebazi, Gird up thy loins,]* That he might travel with greater Expedition.

*And take my staff in thy hand, and go thy way: If thou meet any man, salute him not; and if any man salute thee, answer him not again:]* Left they should enter into Discourse, and stop his Speed.

*And lay my staff upon the face of the child.]* He thought it might work a Miracle, as *Moses's* Rod, and *Elijah's* Mantle did: And if the Woman had had a Faith strong enough, it might have been sufficient. But she distrusted it, and would have *Elisha* go himself. *Abarbinel* thinks he had no Thoughts of reviving the Child by this means, but only ordered his Staff to be laid upon it, to preserve him from Putrefaction. Which is a low Conceit.

*Ver. 30. And the mother of the child said, As the LORD liveth, and as thy soul liveth, I will not leave thee.]* This seems to me to signify, that she did not confide in what he ordered

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Gebazi



Gebazi to do ; but thought his Presence necessary to touch the Child, and pray to God to restore him.

*And he arose, and followed her.]* Being overcome by her Importunity, and his own Kindness to so great a Friend.

Ver. 31. *And Gebazi passed on before them, and laid the staff upon the face of the child, but there was neither voice, nor hearing :]* No Sign of Life appeared, as Gebazi, I suppose, expected.

*Wherefore he went again to meet him, and told him, saying, The child is not awaked.]* He speaks of Death as a Sleep. In which he continued, notwithstanding he had done as *Elisba* commanded. And it is likely that Power was withheld, which might have accompanied the Staff ; because the Prophet changed the Method of his proceeding in working this Miracle ; when the Woman would have him go himself, and did not pray to God, that upon the laying on of the Staff he might revive.

Ver. 32. *And when Elisba came into the house, behold, the child was dead, and laid upon his bed.]* Where his Mother had left him, when she went to *Elisba*, ver. 21.

Ver. 33. *He went in therefore, and shut the door upon them twain, and prayed unto the LORD.]* He shut the Door, that he might not be disturbed by any body, in his Prayer to God.

Ver. 34. *And he went up,]* Upon the Bed.

*And lay upon the child, and put his mouth upon his mouth, and his eyes, upon his eyes, and his hands upon his hands, and he stretched himself upon the child,]* This could not be done all together, because his Face and Body was much larger than the Child's ; but successively : He laid his Mouth upon the Child's Mouth, and his Eyes and Hands upon the Child's Eyes and Hands ; as *Elijah* had done in the like Case, in token that God inspired his Soul again into him, at his earnest Prayer.

*And the flesh of the child waxed warm.]* Not from the external Heat of *Elisba's* Body ; but from an inward Principle of Life, which was restored, and began to move in him.

Ver. 35. *And he returned,]* From the Bed.

*And walked in the house to and fro,]* Took a Turn or two in the House to refresh himself, after the Pains he had taken in Prayer, and otherways, for the Child's Recovery.

*And went up, and stretched himself upon him :]* As he had done before. For this Miracle was not wrought in an Instant, but gradually : By continued vehement Prayer to God.

*And the child neefed seven times,]* A Sign of Health, whereby his Head was purged, in which his Pain lay, ver. 19.

*And the child opened his Eyes.]* After his neefing, he looked upon *Elisba* ; and it is likely spake to him.

Ver. 36. *And he called Gebazi, and said, Call this Shunamite. So he called her : And when she was come in unto him, he said, Take up thy son.]* She came only to the Door of the Room, 'till he bad her take up her Son, and then she came in, as it follows.

Ver. 37. *Then she went in, and fell at his feet, and bowed her self down to the ground,]* Giving Thanks to God, and to him, with a most profound Reverence.

*And took up her son, and went out.]* Publishing no doubt, this wonderful Work of God to all her Family ; who made it known abroad.

Ver. 38. *And Elisba went again to Gilgal.]* Where he was with *Elijah*, a little before he was taken up into Heaven, ii. 1. For those Places, wherein he had been with his Master, he loved to visit ; that he might work Wonders there, and confirm them in a belief that he was a Prophet.

*And there was a dearth in the land,]* A great Scarcity of Provisions.

*And the sons of the prophets were sitting before him :]* Which was the Posture of Disciples when their Masters taught them, who sat above, and their Scholars below, as I observed, ii. 3. and see *Acts* xxii. 3. whence *Bertram* observes their Schools and Academies were called *Ishiboth*, that is, *Sessions*.

*And he said unto his servant, Set on the great pot, and seethe pottage for the sons of the prophets.]* This shews that they lived together in Society, and after their Lectures were wont to eat together with their Master : Who ordered his Servants to prepare some Food for them ; which was very plain and common, such as the Gardens, or Fields would afford ; without much Labour, and of small Price.

Ver. 39. *And one went into the field to gather herbs,]* They went into the Fields, I suppose, to gather what green things they could find ; because there were no Pot-herbs in their Garden at home, by reason of the Drought.

*And found a wild vine and gathered thereof wild gourds his lap-full,]* This is thought to have been *Coloquintida*, which hath a Leaf something like that of a Vine, and purges vehemently.

*And came and shred them into the pot of pottage : for they knew them not.]* Neither he that gathered them, nor they that shred them knew what they were ; but took them to be the Leaves of a wild Vine.

Ver. 40. *So they poured out for the men to eat : and it came to pass, as they were eating of the pottage, that they cried out, and said, O thou man of God, there is death in the pot : And they could not eat thereof.]* It was so bitter and distasteful, that they concluded there was some venomous Herb in the Pot. Perhaps they might know it by the Taste to be what it was : An Herb that purges extreamly, and is Poison, if not qualified and taken in a moderate Quantity.

Ver. 41. *But he said, Then bring meal : and he cast it into the pot ; and he said, Pour out for the people, that they may eat : And there was no harm in the pot.]* Which Alteration was not from any Virtue in the Meal, but from the Power of God. Therefore the *Jews* justly reckon this as the eighth Miracle which *Elisba* wrought, after he was made a Prophet.

Ver. 42. *And there came a man from Baalshalisa, and brought the man of God bread of the first-fruits,]* This was a seasonable Present, it being a Time of Dearth, when Bread was very scarce. And it being called *Biccurim*, (which was the Name for the First-fruits belonging to the Priests) it is likely this was not such a Present as Men were wont to make, when they came to ask a Prophet any Question, and to be resolved of their Doubts (like that, 1 *Kings* xiv. 3.)



but a free-will Offering for the better Subsistence of the Prophet. Unto whom it is probable, pious People gave that Portion, which was assigned by God for the Priests, to whom they could not now carry their First-fruits, they being in the Land of *Judah*. And I suppose the Schools of the Prophets might be partly maintained by this Means.

*Twenty loaves of barley,*] Which were not very large; for then it would not have been a Miracle, that they sufficed for an hundred Men.

*And full ears of corn in the busk thereof :*] Which being parched, they were wont to eat. See *Ruth* ii. 15. But Dr *Hammond* approves rather of our Marginal Translation, and thinks these Words should be rendred, they brought Ears of Corn in a Satchel, or Scrip. See *S. Matthew* x. Annot. e.

*And he said, Give unto the people, that they may eat.*] That is, to the Sons of the Prophets, with whom he then was, when this Present was brought to him.

Ver. 43. *And his servitor said, What, shall I set this before an hundred men ?*] Just as the Apostles said unto our Blessed Saviour, when he intended to feed a far greater Multitude, with less Food. By this it appears there was a great many Scholars, who lived in this Community; and that they used a frugal Diet.

*And he said again, Give the people, that they may eat :*] That is, do as I bid you, and make no Objections.

*For thus saith the LORD, they shall eat, and shall leave thereof.*] As the Multitude left of the Loaves our Saviour caused to be set before them, *John* vi. 11.

Ver. 44. *So he set before them, and they did eat, and left thereof according to the word of the LORD.*] Something like this was done by his Master *Elijah*, for the Woman of *Sarepta*, in Time of Famine; whose Barrel of Meal and Cuse of Oil wasted not for many Days, 'till God sent Rain upon the Earth, *1 Kings* xvii. 14, 16.

## CHAP. V.

Verse 1. **N**OW *Naaman captain of the host of the king of Syria,*] Commander in chief of his whole Army, whom we call *General*.

*Was a great man with his master,*] In great Favour with him.

*And honourable,*] In high Esteem with all the People.

*Because by him the LORD had given deliverance unto Syria :*] He had been victorious in such Battles as he had fought; which this Divine Writer would have the *Israelites* look upon as the LORD's doing.

*He was also a mighty man of valour,*] Being the Person (as the *Jews* say in *Midrasch Tehillim*) who drew the Bow at Adventure and killed *Abab*, *1 Kings* xxii. 34.

*But he was a leper.*] Which did not exclude him from the Society of Men, in that Country, where the *Jewish* Law was not in Force. But it was a great Blemish to him, and also like to prove deadly; there being no Cure for

this Disease, which was very common in *Syria*, as I have elsewhere noted.

Ver. 2. *And the Syrians had gone out by companies,*] The Word which we translate *Company*, doth not signify an Army; but such Troops (or *Parties* as we call them) as made Excursions and Inrodes into the Enemy's Country, to get Booty.

*And had brought away captive out of the land of Israel a little young maid,*] Young Men and Maids were a desirable Part of the Prey, which they got; whom they sold for Money, or employed them in their own Service.

*And she waited on Naamans wife.*] Either she was his Part of the Spoil in that Expedition, or they made a Present of her to him (being beautiful, perhaps, and ingenious) or he bought her of the Soldiers.

Ver. 3. *And she said unto her mistress, Would God my lord was with the prophet that is in Samaria :*] The History left him last at *Gilgal*; but he used to be in several other Places; and when she was taken Captive, was at *Samaria*.

*For he would recover him of his leprosy.*] She related, it is likely, the wonderful Things which he had done; and therefore was confident he could work this Cure.

Ver. 4. *And one went in, and told his lord, Thus and thus said the maid that is of the land of Israel.*] Her Words being related to *Naaman*, he went and told the King his Master what she said, and begged his Leave to go to the Prophet in the Land of *Israel*. The following Words warrant this Sense.

Ver. 5. *And the king of Syria said, Go to, go, and I will send a letter to the king of Israel. And he departed, and took with him ten talents of silver, and six thousand pieces of gold, and ten changes of raiment.*] That he might honourably reward the Prophet, and those that attended him.

Ver. 6. *And he brought the letter to the king of Israel, saying, Now when this letter is come unto thee, behold, I have therewith sent my servant to thee, that thou mayst cure him of his leprosy.*] The Beginning of the Letter is omitted, as not pertinent to the Matter in Hand. It is likely it contained the usual Compliments; after which he desired him, together with this Letter, to receive his Servant *Naaman*, and to cure him of his Leprosy; that is, to take care he might be cured by the Prophet. But this not being plainly expressed, the King of *Israel* apprehended that the Intention of this Demand was only to pick a Quarrel with him, and seek an Occasion, or rather a Pretence for a War with him.

Ver. 7. *And it came to pass, when the king of Israel had read the letter, that he rent his clothes, and said, Am I God, to kill and to make alive,*] He rent his Clothes either as one in great Affliction and Trouble, or (as some will have it) because he looked upon it as Blasphemy, to ascribe that Power to him, which belonged to God alone. For none but he could cure a Leprosy; which he expresses by killing and making alive. Every body, even Beasts, can kill; but when one is killed to make him alive again (thus these Words must be understood in Conjunction) is the Work only of the Almighty.

*That this man doth send unto me to recover a man of his leprosy ?*] To cure this Disease was as hard,



hard, as to raise a dead Man to Life; for the Skin was dead, and the Leprosy fretted and eat into the Flesh.

*Wherefore consider, I pray you, and see how he seeketh a quarrel against me.*] Though he had seen what Miracles *Elisba* had wrought, yet he either had forgot them, or thought this beyond his power; or was loth to see still more Demonstrations of his power with God; and so did not send to him upon this occasion.

Ver. 8. *And it was so, when Elisba the man of God heard that the king of Israel had rent his clothes, he sent to the king, saying, Wherefore hast thou rent thy clothes? Let him come now to me, and he shall know that there is a prophet in Israel.*] As the Word Prophet commonly signifies a Man that declares things which none could know but God, who reveals them by his Spirit; so here it signifies a man endued with a Divine power, who could do that which no man could effect, unless God was with him.

Ver. 9. *So Naaman came with his horses and chariots, and stood at the door of the house of Elisba.*] Expecting, I suppose, that the Prophet would come out to him; or rather out of Reverence to the Prophet, unto whom he sent a message, letting him understand the Cause of his coming; for the Prophet presently answers him, though by his Servant, not by himself.

Ver. 10. *And Elisba sent a messenger unto him, saying,*] It is not to be thought that *Elisba* took State upon him; but it is to be ascribed to the retired sort of Life which the Prophets led, that he did not shew himself to *Naaman*. We see an Instance of this in the foregoing Chapter, where we read that he did not so much as speak with the great Woman, who entertained him at her House, and built an Apartment on purpose for him; but let her understand what he had to say, by his Servant *Gebazi*, ver. 12, 13, &c.

*Go and wash in Jordan seven times,*] Thus Lepers were sprinkled, by the Law of *Moses* seven times, *Levit. xiv. 7, &c.* But it is plain, by the next Verse, *Naaman* expected the Prophet would have been so civil as to come out to him, or invite him to his House, and discourse with him: Neither of which the Prophet thought fit to do; partly for a Trial of his Faith, and partly to let him know that this was not so difficult a Thing as the King imagined, but so easy for him to effect by the Power of God, that he need not come out to talk with him about it: Let him but go to *Jordan* and wash there seven Times, and the Cure should be performed. *Jordan* had no more Virtue in it (as he rightly saith afterwards) than other Rivers; nor was the Earth of *Israel* better than that of *Syria* (though he begged two Load of it) but God presided more particularly over this Country, and his Power here appeared: And in this appeared the more, because Water being cold, was very bad for this Disease: The Root of it being a white watrish Humour, as *Abarbanel* notes, which would naturally, by this Means, be increased.

*And thy flesh shall come again to thee,*] For the Leprosy had eaten into it, and consumed it in Part, as it did *Miriam's*, *Numb. xii. 12.*

*And thou shalt be clean.*] Freed from this filthy Disease.

Ver. 11. *But Naaman was wroth, and went away, and said, I thought surely he will come out to me, and call upon the name of his God, and strike his hand over the place, and recover the leper.*] He was as angry with the Prophet, as if he had scorned and mocked him. First, he thought himself despised, in that he did not come to him and salute him: And then he thought it a thing ridiculous to go and wash in *Jordan*; for what could that Water do more than any other? Thus Men slight common and easy Things, and admire those that are rare and difficult; and in their Passion reject that which God himself propounds to them, if it be not agreeable to their Humours, and their Conceits. In which Passion, if he had continued, he had been a Leper to his dying Day.

Ver. 12. *Are not Abana and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters in Israel?*] The Valley of *Damascus*, which lay between *Libanus* and *Antilibanus*, was washed by five Rivers; the two principal of which descended from Mount *Hermion*; viz. *Abana* and *Pharpar*; the last of which run by the Walls of *Damascus*, and the other run through the City, and divided it into two Parts, as *Bochartus* observes.

*May I not wash in them and be clean? So he turned, and went away in a rage.*] He did not consider that he was now under the Direction of a Prophet, who was supposed to speak from God, who might have prescribed what Method he pleased for his Cure; which was to come from his Divine Power alone, and not from the Virtue of any Water whatsoever.

Ver. 13. *And his servants came near, and spake unto him, and said, My father, if the prophet had bid thee do some great thing, wouldst thou not have done it? How much rather, when he said to thee, Wash and be clean?*] Happy are they who have such excellent Servants as these, who both had the Courage to speak the Truth to their Master, and the Prudence to order it with all Submission and Reverence. For, *My Father*, was a Title of Honour in that Country; by which Name they called their Lords: As Kings were called the Fathers of their Country. And these Servants, perhaps, had heard the young Maid talk much of the Power of the Prophet, which made them very desirous their Master would not refuse his Advice; which they urge him to follow with great Reason; by representing to him that it was the Advice of a Prophet, who was guided by God to give him these Directions. And as it was not fit for Servants to say to their Masters, when they order a Thing, Why so? Why not otherways? So much less should a Man say to God, or his Minister, who speaks in his Name; especially when he commands Things that may be done without much Trouble, or any Pain. For if he had bid him cut and burn, as Chirurgions many times do in grievous Sores, he would have submitted to it: And therefore it was unreasonable not to comply with his Prescriptions, when he required him only to go and wash himself in the River *Jordan*, which was a Thing very easy, in his Way Home, and would put him to no Pain.

Ver. 14. *Then went he down, and dipped himself seven times in Jordan, according to the saying of the man of God:*] He shewed himself a Per-



son of great Probity and Discretion; who was not in such a Rage, but he could hear Reason: And did not refuse good Counsel from his Servants; but suffered himself to be convinced, and over-ruled, to yield unto it.

*And his flesh came again like the flesh of a little child, and he was clean.]* God was not so angry with him, as he was with *Elisba*; but upon his Repentance, and Obedience to his Directions, vouchsafed him a perfect Cure; there being no Mark left of his Leprosy, but his Skin as clear and smooth, as that of a little Child. This was the only Cure of a Leprosy, that we read of, 'till Christ the great Prophet came into the World.

Ver. 15. *And he returned to the man of God, he and all his company, and came and stood before him:]* Now *Elisba* seems to have admitted him into his Presence.

*And said, Now I know that there is no God in all the earth, but in Israel:]* He turned to give Thanks to God, as the good Samaritan did to our Saviour; acknowledging the God that *Elisba* worshipped to be the true God, and that there was no other.

*Now therefore, I pray they, take a blessing of thy servant.]* A Reward, or rather a Token of his Gratitude to him; for the Hebrews call all Gifts a Blessing: The Hebrew Word *Barac* signifying not only *benedicere*, but *benefacere*.

Ver. 16. *And he said, As the LORD liveth, before whom I stand, I will receive none. And he urged him to take it, but he refused.]* He did not think it unlawful to take it, for he received Gifts from others. But he would have Strangers to their Religion know how good the God of *Israel* was; who made his Servants so good, that they did the greatest good to Mankind for nothing. Which generous Piety was apt to invite others to the Worship and Service of this great and good God. For it gives great Authority to a Teacher of Virtue, not to be covetous. See *Lactantius*, Lib. 1. Div. Instit. Cap. 4.

Ver. 17. *And Naaman said, Shall there not then, I pray thee, be given to thy servant two mules burden of earth?] As much as two Mules could carry or draw.*

*For thy servant will henceforth offer neither burnt-offering, nor sacrifice to any other God, but unto the LORD.]* Though he refused to accept his Present, yet he doubted not he would present him with two Burdens of Earth, which he intended to employ in erecting an Altar, whereon he would sacrifice to no other God, but the LORD. He judged it reasonable to have an Altar out of God's Land, because he saw he peculiarly dwelt in *Israel*. And though he might have taken enough as he went along in his Way Home, yet he desired it as a Gift from the Prophet; fancying, perhaps, that he would put a greater Virtue into it, by his Blessing; as he had done into the Waters of *Jordan*: Therefore *Rabag* thinks he desired to have this Earth out of *Elisba's* House where he dwelt; and *Abarbinel* thinks, from under his very Feet in the Place where he stood; of which there is no Certainty. But it is plain he desired to receive it from the Prophet, who had convinced him that there was no God like to his; who had such Power, and made Men so virtuous, as to be above the Love of Money.

Ver. 18. *In this thing the LORD pardon thy servant, that when my master goes into the house of Rimmon, to worship there,]* This was the God of the Syrians, but no Author informs us what God this was, nor whence so called. Only many conjecture, because *Rimmon* in Hebrew signifies a Pomegranate, that *Venus* is hereby meant, to whom such Fruit was sacred. But *Scaliger* understands this to be *Jupiter* the Thunderer, as they called him. And our *Selden* thinks it is derived from *Rum*, which signifies high. Whence *Hesychius* saith, ὁ Παῦς signifies ὁ ὑψιστος θεός, the most High God.

*And he leaneth on my hand,]* Or Shoulder: Which he does out of State; or perhaps out of Weakness, for his Support. In the Additions to the Book of *Esther*, mention is made of two young Women that waited on that Queen, upon one of which she leaned, and the other held up her Train, xv. 4. And it was not only the Custom among the Persians and Syrians, but the Israelites also, as we read in this Book, vii. 2, 17.

*And I bow down myself in the house of Rimmon:]* Together with his Master; who could not well bow, if *Naaman* stood upright, and did not bow his Body with him.

*When I bow down myself in the house of Rimmon, the LORD pardon thy servant in this thing.]* He hoped he might, without Offence to the Divine Majesty, whom alone he resolved to worship, keep the great Office he had under the King his Master, and consequently bow himself when he went with him into the Temple of *Rimmon*: He who sees into the Hearts of Men, knowing it was no Act of Worship to that God; but only a necessary Respect to his Master. And so the Word is used for Civil Honour, as well as Religious Adoration. Thus *Lud. de Dieu* hath clearly rendred this whole Verse, *In this thing the LORD pardon thy servant; when my master enters into the temple of Rimmon to worship there, he leans upon my hand, and so I bow my self (that is, together with him) in the house of Rimmon: When I bow my self in the house of Rimmon, the LORD pardon thy servant in this thing.]* Let him not take Offence, since I intend not to worship *Rimmon*; as appeared by his sacrificing only to the God of *Israel*. An Israelite indeed was forbidden to bow before an Idol, whatsoever his Mind or Intention was in that Act: But a Stranger was not bound by this Law, as Mr *Selden* shews the Opinion of the Jews is, Lib. 2. de Jure Nat. & Gent. Cap. 11. Therefore when *Naaman* went into the Temple, not of his own Accord, but meerly to wait upon his Master, and perform the Duty of his Office; since he professed himself a Worshipper of the most High God alone, and brought Earth out of his Land, and sacrificed only upon the Altar made of it: All he thought might understand he did not worship *Rimmon*, but only payed his Respects to the King, when he bowed with him.

Ver. 19. *And he said unto him, Go in peace.]* The prophet did not condemn this; but bad him not trouble himself about this Matter; for he did not offend against God's Law, which was not intended for such as he was: Though there are some of the Jews who think that these Words, *go in Peace*, relate to the Verse  
fore-



foregoing; that he need not to trouble himself about carrying Earth with him out of the Land of *Israel* to make an Altar (for it doth not appear he gave him any) and so left this Matter of bowing in the House of *Rimmon* undetermined. And no less a Person than *Bochartus* hath a large Dissertation about this whole Matter; wherein he endeavours to defend their Opinion, who think *Naaman* begs Pardon for what he had done in Times past, not for what he should continue to do; and renders these Words (as *Dr Lightfoot* also doth) *when I have bowed, &c.* But this seems to me altogether improbable; for then he would not have mentioned what he did as the King's Servant; but simply the Idolatry he had committed in worshipping *Rimmon*. Besides, the Oriental Versions, as well as the Greek and the Vulgar, and the Hebrew Doctors generally, as well as Christian Interpreters, understand it as we do, that he speaks of the future Act of Bowing; which being only a civil Action, and he declaring himself publickly to be a Worshipper only of the God of *Israel*, he hoped would not be imputed to him as a Sin. And so the famous *Buxtorfius* in a Letter to *Theod. Hackspan* saith, *Omnes quotquot vidi Interpretes referunt ad futurum, &c.* "All Interpreters, as many as I have seen, refer this to the future, and not to the Time past: And so doth the *Chaldee* Paraphrast himself: And I am very much of the same Opinion.

*So he departed from him a little way.*] About a Mile from the City, as the Jewish Doctors understand it.

Ver. 20. *But Gebazi the servant of the man of God said, Behold, my master hath spared Naaman the Syrian, in not receiving at his hands that which he brought: but as the LORD liveth I will run after him, and take somewhat of him.*] He seems to be angry that his Master had been so kind to one that needed not his Charity, and was also one of another Nation, and therefore in his Passion swore, he would take something of him. Which Covetousness plunged him into a great many other Sins, as the Apostle observes it usually doth, 1 *Tim.* vi. 9, 10. *Dr Lightfoot* thinks the Hebrew Text hath divinely omitted a Letter in one Word, that it might the more brand him for this Villany. *I will run,* saith he, *after Naaman,* and take *נִמְצָה* a Blot, instead of *נִמְצָה* somewhat.

Ver. 21. *And Gebazi followed Naaman: and when Naaman saw him, he lighted down from the chariot to meet him, and said, Is all well?*] Behold the Honour he gave to the Prophet, in doing such Honour to his Servant; which testified he had a great Sense of God, and of his Goodness to him, in his Heart.

Ver. 22. *And he said, All is well: My master hath sent me, saying, Behold, even now there is come to me from mount Ephraim two of the sons of the prophets:]* It seems there was a School there, as well as at *Jericho*, *Beth-el*, *Carmel*, and other Places.

*Give them, I pray thee, a talent of silver, and two changes of raiment.*] To relieve their Poverty. This was the first Fruit of his Covetousness, which put him upon inventing such a wicked Slander of his Master. For why should *Elisha* desire so much Silver for two young

Scholars? Which might tempt *Naaman* to think, that though he publickly declined to take a Gift from him, yet he secretly desired it. See *Dr Hammond* on *S. Matth.* vi. Annot. k.

Ver. 23. *And Naaman said, Be content; take two talents; and he urged him.*] It is likely *Gebazi* pretended to keep strictly to his Master's Orders, and would have but one, 'till *Naaman's* Generosity pressed and overcame him to take more.

*And he bound two talents of silver in two bags, with two changes of raiment, and laid them upon two of his servants, and they bare them before him.*] As Servants do before Persons of Honour.

Ver. 24. *And when he came to the tower,] To the Place where Elisha lodged. Or, as some will have it, to a secret Place where he laid up what he had got.*

*He took them from the men, and bestowed them in the house; and let the men go, and they departed.]* For he was afraid his Master should see them.

Ver. 25. *And he came in, and stood before his master:]* As Servants were wont to do, to see if their Master wanted any thing.

*And Elisha said unto him, Whence comest thou Gebazi? And he said, Thy servant went no whither.]* This was another impudent Lie, wherein he thought to deceive his Master, though he was a Prophet. Which was an impious Endeavour to deceive the Spirit of God, whose Minister *Elisha* was: Like that Lie of *Ananias* and *Sapphira*, *Acts* v. 3, &c.

Ver. 26. *And he said, Went not my heart with thee, when the man turned again from his chariot to meet thee?] Did not God represent to my Mind, as if I had been present, how Naaman came to meet thee, and what thou saidst to him, and what he gave thee? For no doubt, he recited all that had passed between them; to convince him of his Folly (in thinking to cheat him) and put him to Shame and Confusion.*

*Is it a time to receive money, and to receive garments, and vine-yards, and olive-yards, and sheep and oxen, and men-servants, and maid-servants?] Which Gebazi designed to purchase with the two Talents: At a very unreasonable Time, when the Nation, for their Sins, were in Danger to be carried Captive out of their Land. Which though it did not fall out 'till above 150 Years after this, yet great Devastations followed the Death of Elisha.*

Ver. 27. *The leprosy therefore of Naaman shall cleave unto thee, and unto thy seed, for ever.]* Unto many Generations, as the Word *for ever* frequently signifies. But the Hebrew Doctors say this relates only unto his Children that were then born; who were conscious to his Crime, and approved of it. See more of this, *viii.* 4, 5.

*And he went out from his presence, a leper as white as snow.]* He punished him with the worst sort of Leprosy, which was incurable. For his Sin was exceeding great, or rather he was guilty of many Sins, besides those already mentioned; being a Thief, and taking that to himself, which was given to others. Nay, he was a sacrilegious Person, in robbing the Sons of the Prophets, who were Men belonging to God, in a special manner. The Hebrew Doctors reckon



reckon seven Sins, for which God punished Men with the Plague of Leprosy, and endeavour to prove it out of Scripture; and Gehazi was guilty of more than one of them, and therefore justly punished in an extraordinary manner. They are, an evil Tongue, shedding of Blood, a false Oath, uncovering of any forbidden Nakedness, Inflation of Spirit, Rapine, and Envy.

C H A P. VI.

Verse 1. **A**ND the sons of the prophets] That were at Gilgal; for that is the Place last mentioned where the Prophet was, iv. 38. and was also near to Jordan mentioned in the next Verse.

Said unto Elisha, Behold now, the place where we dwell with thee] They had their Colleges sometimes in Cities (as in Beth-el) and sometimes in the Fields, and sometimes upon Mountains. It is probable this was in the Fields; where Elisha, for the present, was resident among them.

Is too strait for us.] Their Number of Scholars was so much increased under so eminent a Master as he was, that there was not Room enough for them.

Ver. 2. Let us go, we pray thee,] They were so much under his Government, that they did not take the Liberty to go any whither without his Leave.

Unto Jordan,] Near to which many Trees grew.

And take from thence every man a beam,] A piece of Timber.

And let us make us a place there where we may dwell.] A Tabernacle large enough to contain them all. From whence we may gather that the Sons of the Prophets did not spend all their Time in studying the Law, Meditation and Prayer, and such holy Exercises; but also employed themselves in some Manufactures, as the Apostles did in after-times: Some of which were Tent-makers (Acts xviii. 3.) like to these here mentioned.

And he answered, Go ye.] He consented to their Design, the Place which they chose being very commodious for Students. As St Hierom observes, who in more Places than one (see his Epistles to Rusticus and to Paulina) compares the Monks of his Time with these Sons of the Prophets, *Qui habitabant in agris, & solitudinibus, & faciebant sibi tabernacula propè fluentia Jordanis.*

Ver. 3. And one said, Be content, I pray thee, and go with thy servants. And he answered, I will go.] They thought their Design would prosper the better under his Conduct; and that if any one questioned what they did, his Authority would over-awe them.

Ver. 4. So he went with them. And when they came to Jordan, they cut down wood.] They began to go about their Work.

Ver. 5. But as one was felling a beam, the ax-head fell into the water:] Being not well fastned to the Helve; or rather the Helve breaking.

And he cried, and said, Alas master, for it was borrowed.] Good Men are religiously careful that none suffer by their Kindness to them. This shews that as these Sons of the Prophets

wrought with their own Hands, going themselves to cut down Wood to build withal, so (some of them at least) they were but poor, being not furnished with Tools for their Work, but forced to borrow.

Ver. 6. And the man of God said, Where fell it? And he shewed him the place. And he cut down a stick,] To serve, I suppose, instead of a Helve.

And cast it into the water, and the iron did swim.] A double Miracle, as the Jews understand it, that Iron which was sunk down to the Bottom, rose up; and then went to the Stick, and was joined to it, at its Helve. For to what End should he throw a Stick into the Water, but that it should serve this Purpose?

Ver. 7. Therefore said he, Take it to thee. And he put out his hand and took it.] It fell near the River Side, or was brought thither when it rose up.

Ver. 8. Then the king of Syria warred against Israel, and took counsel with his servants, saying, In such and such a place shall be my camp.] He did not rely meerly on the Number of his Forces, but secretly resolved, by the Advice of his Council, to place them in such Posts where he might hope to surprize the Israelites. It may seem strange, that after such a great Benefit lately received in the Cure of Naaman, the King should send him, who was Captain of his Host, to fight against Israel. But who can tell how long this was after that Time, when Naaman might be dead? Or, perhaps, Naaman might have lost his Place; because he refused to worship Rimmon; and no Benefit will reconcile inveterate Enemies.

Ver. 9. And the man of God sent to the king of Israel, saying, Beware that thou pass not such a place; for thither the Syrians are come down.] And had laid an Ambush for him there.

Ver. 10. And the king of Israel sent to the place which the man of God told him, and warned him of,] He sent some Spies to see whether Elisha gave him true Information.

And saved himself there, not once or twice.] By this means he frequently saved his Soldiers from falling into the Hands of the Syrians; who lay in wait for them in such Places, where they would certainly have gone, if they had not been told of the Danger.

Ver. 11. Therefore the heart of the king of Syria was sorely troubled for this thing, and he called his servants,] With whom he had consulted how to carry on this War, ver. 8.

And said unto them, Will ye not shew me which of us is for the king of Israel?] Betrays my Counsels to him: For he could not think he should meet with such constant Disappointments, unless it were by Treachery.

Ver. 12. And one of his servants said, None, my lord O king: but Elisha the prophet, that is in Israel, telleth the king of Israel the words thou speakest in thy bed-chamber.] It is likely Naaman had spread the Fame of the Prophet so much in this Court, that some of them made further Enquiry after him; and heard more of his miraculous Works; and thence concluded he could tell the greatest Secrets, as well as to do such Wonders, as were reported of him.

Ver. 13. And he said, Go, and spy where he is, that I may send and fetch him.] A very foolish Design.



Design. As if the Prophet could not as well know this, as he did the rest of his other Counsels.

*And it was told him, saying, He is in Dothan.]* A City in the Tribe of Manasseh; not far from Shechem and Samaria.

Ver. 14. *Therefore sent he thither horses, and chariots, and a great host:]* That the People of Dothan, being affrighted at the Sight of such a Number of Soldiers, might not dare to defend the Prophet.

*And they came by night, and compassed the city about.]* That no Intelligence might be carried to Samaria.

Ver. 15. *And when the servant of the man of God was risen early,]* As Students were wont to do.

*And was gone forth,]* Out of the Door of the House, which stood high; the City being built upon a Hill.

*Behold, an host compassed the city, both with horses and chariots: and his servant said unto him, Alas, my Master, how shall we do?]* Perhaps the Syrians had assured the Inhabitants they intended no Harm to them; but only came to take Elisha. Which the young Man hearing, it put him in great Fear; for being but newly come to his Master in the Room of Gehazi, and having perhaps seen none of his wonderful Works, he gave himself and his Master for lost Men.

Ver. 16. *And he answered, Fear not: for they that be with us, are no more than they that be with them.]* Faith drives away Fear; but it was hard for the young Man to believe this, 'till he had more Experience of God's Providence over his Prophet: And therefore Elisha prays he might have a Demonstration of it.

Ver. 17. *And Elisha prayed, and said, LORD, I pray thee, open his eyes that he may see. And the LORD opened the eyes of the young man, and he saw: And the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire]* He beheld the Camp of God there (as the Angels are called, Gen. xxxii. 2.) ready at Hand to defend his Master. Legions of Angels (Matth. xxvi. 35.) which were far more numerous and powerful than the Host of the Syrians which he saw compass the City; but did not see this Heavenly Host 'till God opened his Eyes, and represented them to him. The Ancients think that the Angels, when present with us, appear where they please, and are invisible where they please, though present. Now this Appearance of theirs in this Place is called the opening of his Eyes; because it had the same Effect. For he beheld the Mountain (on which, I suppose, the City stood) where he saw none but Syrians before, was now full of fiery Chariots and Horses, which, as it here follows, had incircled Elisha.

*Round about Elisha.]* That is, he saw in this Vision, as if Elisha was in the midst of this glorious Camp of Angels; who defended him so that none could penetrate and break through unto him.

Ver. 18. *And when they came down to him,]* He seems to have gone out of the City to them, under the Divine Protection; intending to go to Samaria. And they seeing him, asked him the Way to the Man of God.

*Elisha prayed unto the LORD, and said, Smite this people, I pray thee, with blindness. And he*

*smote them with blindness, according to the word of Elisha.]* So that they might not be able perfectly to distinguish one thing from another.

Ver. 19. *And Elisha said unto them, This is not the way, neither is this the city:]* Some think we are not bound to speak Truth to an Enemy; but there is no need that this should be asserted here. For it was true that they were not in the Way to find Elisha; whom they should not see 'till they came to another City.

*Follow me, and I will bring you to the man whom ye seek.]* As he really did. But their Minds were struck with Blindness, as well as their Eyes; or else, they would not have committed themselves to the Conduct of a Stranger, to follow him in an Enemy's Country, they knew not whither.

*But he led them to Samaria.]* This shews they were not wholly blind, for then they could not have been led by him: But were dark, as we speak, and could not clearly discern who it was that led them, nor whither they were going. Here the Jews cry, Behold a double Miracle! Elisha's Servant saw that which appeared to no body else; and the Syrians could not discern that which every body else saw.

Ver. 20. *And it came to pass, when they were come into Samaria, that Elisha said, LORD open the eyes of these men, that they may see. And the LORD opened their eyes, and they saw, that behold, they were in the midst of Samaria.]* To their great Astonishment, no doubt, when they found that he had made them all Captives, whom they came to carry away to Syria.

Ver. 21. *And the king of Israel said to Elisha, when he saw them, My father,]* This Miracle touched him with great Reverence to the Prophet.

*Shall I smite them, shall I smite them?]* This Repetition of the Question, expresses his eager Desire to fall upon them, and kill them; if the Prophet would have permitted.

Ver. 22. *And he answered, Thou shalt not smite them:]* There was a Command to destroy the People of the seven Nations; yet not, if they yielded to them. But as for other Persons, who were taken in the War, they were not bound to destroy them; but it was Humanity rather to spare them. Whence it is that the Prophet here forbids the King to smite these, who were not under the Curse of the People of Canaan.

*Wouldst thou smite those whom thou hast taken captive with thy sword, and with thy bow?]* As much as to say, thou wouldst not be so cruel, as in cold Blood to kill those whom thou thyself hadst taken Prisoners in a Battle. Much more then are those to be spared, who are not thy Captives, but God's. Thou hast not taken them with thy Sword, or with thy Bow; but he hath brought them to thee, and delivered them into thy Hand: Not that thou mayest kill them, but use them kindly. To this Purpose Rabbag; see Selden de Jure Nat. & Gent. pag. 745.

*Set bread and water before them, that they may eat and drink, and go to their master.]* And tell him what Civility and Kindness there is among the People of God. This is a rare Example of that which St Paul recommends to us, Rom. xii. 20. *If thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink, &c.*



Ver. 23. *And he prepared great provision for them : and when they had eat and drunk, he sent them away, and they went to their master.]* This is a new Wonder, that the Hearts of the *Israelites* should so yield unto the Command of the Prophet, as not only to spare, but to entertain bountifully their old Enemies.

*And the bands of the Syrians came no more into the land of Israel.]* Great Hatreds are sometimes overcome by unexpected and undeserved Benefits ; as many of the Heathens have observed, that this is the noblest Way to conquer them, particularly *Valerius Maximus. Speciosius injuriæ beneficiis vincuntur, quàm mutui odii pertinacia pensantur* ; Injuries are more gloriously overcome by Benefits, than requited by pertinacious mutual Hatred. But the Sense of Benefits in bad Natures doth not last long ; for in the very Verse we read, how the King of Syria besieged *Samaria*. Which seems to contradict what is said here, that the *Syrians* came no more into the Land of *Israel*. But the Meaning of that is, (for no Man can think that any Author whatsoever would contradict himself in the same Breath) either that for this Time they retreated quite, and laid aside all Thoughts of War, though afterwards they broke out again into Hostility : Or (which is the plainest) that their Bands made no more Incursions and Inrodes ; but they resolved to come and fall upon them, not in small Parties, and by Ambushes, (as they did before, ver. 8.) but with a formed Army, wherewith they laid Siege to *Samaria*.

Ver. 24. *And it came to pass after this, that Benhadad king of Syria]* The Name of *Benhadad* was common to all the Kings of Syria, as *Pharaoh* was to those of Egypt.

*Gathered all his host, and went up, and besieged Samaria :]* It seems the *Israelites* had not Forces to appear against him in the Field : So that he marched directly to *Samaria*, and laid Siege to it.

Ver. 25. *And there was a great famine in Samaria : and behold, they besieged it, 'till an asses head was sold for fourscore pieces of silver,]* The Siege lasted so long, or they were so ill provided for it, that there was a great Scarcity of Food in this City : Infomuch that an Ass's Head was sold for so many Shekels as make five Pound of our Money. A great Sum for the Head, when the whole Body was little worth ; and it being an unclean Creature, it was not lawful for the *Israelites* to eat (yea, was accounted unclean by the *Arabians*) unless in case of extream Necessity. See *Bochartus* in his *Hierozyicon*, P. 1. Lib. 2. Cap. 13. where he observes out of *Plutarch*, that there was such a Scarcity in *Artaxerxes* his Army, when he was among the *Cadusii*, that an Ass's Head was sold for threescore *Drachms*.

*And the fourth part of a cab]* A *Cab* was a very small Measure of Corn ; containing, as the *Jews* say, as much as twenty-four Eggs would hold. It is never mentioned in the Scripture but only here ; though very often in the *Talmud* in the Title *Kiddushim*. See *Imbonacius* in the *Biblioth. Mag. Rabbin.* Tom. 5. p. 349. All agree it was such a Measure as I have mentioned ; so that the fourth Part of it was no more than six

Eggs would contain, called a *Log*, as *Bochartus* thinks.

*Of doves dung]* So the *Chaldee*, *Syriack*, *Arabick*, and *LXX* translate the Hebrew Word *Hirjonim* : And so a great many of the *Jewish* Doctors, *Jarchi*, *Kimchi*, *Rabag*, understand it. Though it be very hard to believe, that *Doves Dung* should be so plentiful in a City, as to be sold in any Quantity ; or that Men should eat it ; when every one knows there is no Nourishment in such Excrements, and less in that of Doves than in others, as is observed by *Bochartus* ; who after he hath confuted many other Opinions, hath made it very probable, that *Fitches*, or *Lentiles* are here meant ; which were the vilest of all Food, and yet sold at this dear Rate. For that some sort of Food is here meant, is plain from what goes before. See his *Hierozyicon*, P. 2. Lib. 1. Cap. 7.

*For five pieces of silver.]* Which the same Author computes to be as much as Nine French Livres.

Ver. 26. *And as the king of Israel was passing by upon the wall,]* To see if they kept their Guards well ; or, to observe how the Enemy lay.

*There cried unto him a woman, saying, Help, my lord O king.*

Ver. 27. *And he said, If the L O R D do not help thee, whence shall I help thee ? out of the barn-floor, or out of the wine-press ?]* Some take the first Words to be a Curse, and translate them as we do in the Margin, *Let not the L O R D save, or help thee*. Like that among the *Gentiles*, *Dii Deaque te perdant*. May thou perish. Thus *Josephus* understands them to be the Words of a Man in a great Passion, and full of Fury, that she should implore Relief from him, who could do nothing for himself, For he thought she had cried to him for Victuals, as appears by the last Words.

Ver. 28. *And the king said unto her, What aileth thee ?]* When she had pacified his Anger, or it cooled of it self, he asked her the Cause of her Cry.

*And she answered, This woman]* Who stood by her.

*Said unto me, Give thy son that we may eat him to day, and we will eat my son to morrow.]* Thus began the Prophecy of *Moses* to be fulfilled, *Deut. xxxviii. 54, 55, &c.*

Ver. 29. *So we boiled my son, and did eat him : that I said unto her on the next day, Give thy son, that we may eat him : and she hath hid her son.]* Either that she might save him, or that she might eat him alone, and thereby preserve her Life the longer.

Ver. 30. *And it came to pass when the king heard the words of the woman, that he rent his clothes,]* Out of great Grief at what the Woman had said ; or, perhaps out of Indignation at the Prophet, with whom the next Verse shews he was very angry.

*And he passed by upon the wall, and the people looked, and behold, he had sackcloth within upon his flesh.]* His Royal Robes, which were uppermost, being torn, they saw Sackcloth (in token of great Humiliation) next to his Skin. For these Idolatrous Kings were not so profane, but they observed some of the ancient Rites of



Religion: Among which this was one; to abase and afflict themselves, in Times of great Calamity, by putting Sackcloth upon their naked Body.

Ver. 31. *Then he said, God do so to me, and more also, if the head of Elisha the son of Shaphat shall stand on him this day.*] Such was the Arbitrary Power which these Kings exercise; which took away Mens Lives, without any formal Process against them; and the Reason of this furious Resolution seems to be, either because *Elisha* had hindered him from smiting the great Host of the Syrians, when he had them cooped up in *Samaria* (ver. 20, 21, 22.) which might have disabled them from bringing him into these Straits: Or, because *Elisha* did not imploy his Interest in God, as he expected, to give them Deliverance. Therefore he swore he should not live 'till Night.

Ver. 32. *And Elisha sat in his house,*] In the School, where the Sons of the Prophets came to be instructed by him.

(*And the elders sat with him*)] We often read in *Ezekiel*, of the Elders of *Israel* sitting before the Prophet to hear him, viii. 1. xxii. 24: And so some understand it here, of the chief Persons in *Samaria*, who were come to consult him. But it rather signifies his chief Scholars, some grave Persons, who applied themselves to the Study of divine things, and were now with him.

*And the king sent a man from before him:*] Commanded one that attended him, to go, and execute the Sentence he had pronounced against *Elisha*.

*But e'er the messenger came to him, he said to the elders, See how this son of a murderer hath sent to take away mine head?*] He understood, by the Spirit of Prophecy, the wicked Intentions of the King; who was like his Father *Abah* that had murdered many of the Prophets of the LORD.

*Look when the messenger cometh, shut the door, and hold him fast at the door: is not the sound of his masters feet behind him?*] He charged them to lay hold of him before he came into the Room, and not suffer him to enter; for the King would immediately follow him, to revoke his Order. So he foresaw by the same Spirit of Prophecy, that the King repented of what he had decreed, and was coming to revoke it; and therefore he only required the Elders to do that which he knew the King would do himself, viz. Stop the Messenger at the Door, and let him proceed no further. This will not warrant private Men to apprehend publick Officers; nor to use such Words to Princes as the Prophet here doth to *Foram*, whom he calls *the son of a murderer*, by a Divine Motion. Which authorized him to represent him, as the impious Son of a very impious Father.

Ver. 33. *And while he yet talked with them, behold, the messenger came down unto him: and he said, Behold, this evil is of the LORD, what should I wait for the LORD any longer?*] Some imagine that the Messenger being come, spake these Words in the King's Name. But it seems more reasonable to think the King, who was also come, spake them himself, in a Fit of raging Despair. He could not but acknowledge,

that the LORD had brought them into this Distress. Upon whom *Elisha* exhorted him to wait 'till he would please (who only could do it) to deliver them. But he impatiently answered, he had waited so long in vain, that he had no Hope left, since they were driven to such Extremity, that Women eat their own Children. Or, these Words may be thus interpreted (taking the former Part of them to be spoken by the Prophet, and the latter by the King) *And he said*, that is, the Prophet said, acknowledge the Hand of God in this Evil, which comes from him. To which the King replied, and what else can I expect from the LORD, unless it be such Plagues? No, saith *Elisha* in the very next Words, ye shall have Plenty here to-morrow.

## CHAP. VII.

Verse 1. *AND Elisha said,*] Unto the King, who followed the Messenger (see the foregoing Chapter, ver. 32, 33.) and spake such Words as *Elisha* here satisfies him were very unreasonable.

*Hear ye the word of the LORD, Thus saith the LORD, to morrow about this time shall a measure of fine flour be sold for shekel, and two measures of barley for a shekel,*] The Hebrew Word *Seab* signifies a certain Measure, containing the thirtieth Part of an Omer: Which is about a Peck of our Measure.

*In the gate of Samaria.*] Which was the Market-place, as well as a Place for other publick Meetings. See 2 Sam. xix. 8.

Ver. 2. *Then a lord on whose hand the king leaned,*] Some think this was the Messenger which the King sent to see Execution done upon *Elisha*. Whosoever he was, he was greatly beloved by the King; for when he went abroad he leaned on him, which was a Sign he was dear to him. For this State Kings in those Countries took upon them, to lean upon some Favourite. As Queen *Esther*, the Jews say, had a young Lady on whom she rested her right Hand, after the manner of the Eastern Kings. See upon ver. 18.

*Answered the man of God, and said, Behold, if the LORD should make windows in heaven, might this thing be?*] He was incredulous, and seems to have laughed at what the Prophet said: Looking upon it as unlikely, as that God would rain Corn from Heaven, as once he did *Manna*.

*And he said, Behold, thou shalt see it with thine eyes, but thou shalt not eat thereof.*] A just Punishment of his Unbelief. And such will be the Portion of those that believe not the Promise of Eternal Life..

Ver. 3. *And there were four leprous men*] The Jews will have these to have been *Gebazi*, and his three Sons; as they say in *Gemara Sanhedrin*, p. 416. Edit. J. Coch.

*At the entering of the gate:*] Of the City *Samaria*. From whence Lepers were thrust out, as anciently out of the Camp, *Levit. xiii. 46. xiv. 3. Numb. v. 23.* But they got as near the Gate of the City as they could, for fear of the Enemy. It appears by this that the *Israelites* observed the Ceremonial Law; though they were gross Idolaters.



*And they said one to another, Why sit we here until we die ?]* For the City could no longer supply their Wants, having not sufficient for themselves.

Ver. 4. *If we say we will enter into the city, then the famine is in the city, and we shall die there :]* Lepers might sometimes come into their Cities, if there was a great Occasion, keeping their due Distance from every one ; as appears, some think, from Gebazi's talking with the King himself, in the next Chapter, viii. 4. but more plainly from this Place. See Grotius upon St Luke vii. 12.

*And if we sit still here, we die also.]* The Besiegers having carried away all the Food thereabouts.

*Now therefore come, and let us fall into the host of the Syrians :]* Who possibly might take Compassion upon miserable People, though Enemies to them.

*If they save us alive, we shall live ;]* They will not let us starve, but give us Food.

*And if they kill us, we shall but die.]* They knew the worst that could happen to them, was to lose their Lives ; which they should certainly do where they were ; and therefore they chose an uncertain Evil, before a certain.

Ver. 5. *And they rose up in the twilight, to go unto the camp of the Syrians :]* In the close of the Evening, as appears from ver. 9, and 12.

*And when they were come to the uttermost part of the camp of Syria,]* Unto their Trenches.

*Behold, there was no man there.]* Not a Man to guard them, nor so much as a Centinel to watch them.

Ver. 6. *For the L O R D had made the host of Syria to hear a noise of chariots, and a noise of horses ; even the noise of a great host :]* By the Ministry of Angels he made such a rattling like that of Chariots, and prancing of Horses, that the Syrians imagined a great Army was not only marching towards them, but ready to fall upon them.

*And they said one to another, Lo, the king of Israel hath hired against us the kings of the Hittites, and the kings of Egypt, to come upon us.]* Those People of the Land of Canaan called Hittites, who dwelt about Hebron and Beersheba, were rooted out by the Israelites. But either some of them fled, and settled themselves in some Neighbouring Country, and there grew very populous ; or else, we are to understand by the Kings of the Hittites (as Josephus doth) the Kings τῶν νήσων, of the Isles, Lib. ix. Antiq. Cap. 2. As if Chittim was the same with Cetim, as all Isles he saith are called. Every one of which had a King ; as Egypt it self was then divided into several Kingdoms : Whose Help the Syrians thought the King of Israel had procured.

Ver. 7. *Wherefore they arose and fled in the twilight,]* Being but newly gone, when the Lepers came thither.

*And they left their tents, and their horses, and their asses,]* Asses were employed in War as well as Horses ; at least for carrying of their Baggage. So Bochartus observes out of Pollux, χρεῖα δ' εἰς πολέμους σκευοφόρων ὄνων, Asses are of use in War to carry Burdens. There were several People also, that fought upon Asses, as

others did upon Horses : Which he proves out of Ælian, and other Authors. See Hierozoicon, P. 2. Lib. 2. Cap. 13.

*Even the camp as it was, and fled for their life.]* They thought of saving nothing but themselves ; their Fear being so great, that they left all they had behind them.

Ver. 8. *And when these lepers came into the uttermost part of the camp, they went into one tent, and did eat and drink, and carried thence silver and gold, and raiment, and went and hid it ; and came again, and entred into another tent, and carried from thence also, and went and hid it.]* They had satisfied their Hunger in the first Tent, so that they had nothing now to do, but to get what Treasure they could find, and secure it.

Ver. 9. *Then they said one to another, We do not well :]* When they had both well refreshed, and enriched themselves, and also secured their Booty, they began to reflect upon the Distress of their Brethren ; and condemned themselves for making no more Haste to impart unto them the Discovery they had made of the Enemies Flight, and the Plenty of all things they found in their Camp.

*This is a day of good tidings, and we hold our peace :]* Do not publish the Goodness of God to us all.

*If we tarry till the morning light, some mischief will come upon us :]* The Syrians might possibly recover out of their Fright, and return when they saw none pursue them : Or, some of them might be lurking thereabout, and come and kill them.

*Now therefore come, that we may go and tell the kings household.]* Impart this joyful News to the City. For every good Citizen is in Duty bound to discover every thing that is for the publick Safety.

Ver. 10. *So they came, and called to the porter of the city :]* To him that was the chief Commander at the Gate of Samaria.

*And they told them,]* Him and the Guard that was with him.

*Saying, We came into the camp of the Syrians, and behold, there was no man there, neither voice of man, but horses tied, and asses tied, and the tents as they were.]* Standing without any body in them : But full of Provision, and Riches.

Ver. 11. *And he called the porters,]* Of the King's House.

*And they told it to the kings house within.]* Reported it in the Court, 'till it came to the King's Ears.

Ver. 12. *And the king arose in the night, and said unto his servants, I will now shew you what the Syrians have done to us :]* What their Stratagem is.

*They know that we be hungry, therefore are they gone out of the camp, to hide themselves in the field, saying, When they shall come out of the city, we shall catch them alive, and get into the city.]* His long Sufferings had made him suspicious and cautious ; and this was no improbable Conjecture.

Ver. 13. *And one of his servants answered, and said, Let some take, I pray thee, five of the horses that remain, which are left in the city, (Behold, they are as all the multitude of Israel that are left in it : Behold, I say, they are even as all the multi-*



*multitude of the Israelites that are consumed) and let us send and see.]* He repeats his Advice twice, that it might make the greater Impression on the King. The Sense of which is this: That they were almost consumed with Hunger, and must shortly die, as all the Horses and the *Israelites* had done, whom the Famine had killed. Therefore if these Horses and Men were taken by the *Syrians*, there would be no great Loss of them; for they would be lost if they remained in *Samaria*.

Ver. 14. *They took therefore two chariot-horses, and the king sent after the host of the Syrians, saying, Go and see.]* Whether they were gone or no. Some understand the Horses of two Chariots, which might in all be five: But it is more probable, the King would venture no more than two Horsemen, which he thought enough; who took two of the Horses of his own Chariots to make Discovery.

Ver. 15. *And they went after them unto Jordan,]* Finding the Camp empty, as the Lepers had related; they pursued them as far as this River.

*And lo, all the way was full of garments, which the Syrians had cast away in their haste: and the messengers returned and told the king.]* The Certainty of their Flight to their own Country.

Ver. 16. *And the people went out, and spoiled the tents of the Syrians. So a measure of fine flour was sold for a shekel, and two measures of barley for a shekel, according to the word of the L O R D.]* They found such store of Provision, in the Tents of the *Syrians*, that it made this sudden Change in the Price of Corn; according to *Elisha's* Prediction.

Ver. 17. *And the king appointed the lord on whom his hand leaned, to have the charge of the gate:]* To take care the People did not run out tumultuously, and leave the City empty; nor commit any Disorder in the Gate; being very eager to get Victuals.

*And the people trod upon him in the gate, and he died,]* They came out in such Crouds, and pressed upon him so hard, that they threw him down, and trod him to Death.

*As the man of God had said, who spake when the king came down to him.]* ver. 2.

Ver. 18. *And it came to pass as the man of God had spoken to the king, saying, Two measures of barley for a shekel, and a measure of fine flour for a shekel, shall be to morrow at this time in the gate of Samaria:]* By this it should seem there was a Market kept in the Gate of *Samaria*, where Provisions were sold: And this Lord was set to see good Order kept, that they might neither take them by Force, nor make any Disturbance.

Ver. 19. *And the lord answered the man of God, saying, Now behold, if the L O R D should make windows in heaven, might such a thing be? And he said, Thou shalt see it with thine eyes, but shalt not eat thereof.]* This part of the History is repeated, because it is a most remarkable fulfilling of a Divine Prediction; whereby their Belief of God's Providence, ordering all things in a wonderful manner, was confirmed.

Ver. 20. *And so it fell out unto him: for the people trod upon him in the gate, and he died.]* Before he could enjoy the Benefit of that Plen-

ty which God had bestowed upon them. Which did not at all alter their Hearts, but they continued so obstinately deaf to all the Prophet's Admonitions, and miraculous Works, that in the next Chapter we read of another long Famine coming upon them.

## C H A P. VIII.

Verse 1. **T**HEN spake *Elisha* unto the woman, (*whose son he restored to life*)] iv. 35, 36.

*Saying, Arise, and go thou and thy household, and sojourn where thou canst sojourn:]* In some Country out of the Land of *Israel*.

*For the L O R D hath called for a famine,]* He had already ordered, and decreed it.

*And it shall come upon the land seven years.]* Continue as long again as that in the Days of *Abab*, which lasted three Years and an half. For as their Iniquities increased, so did their Punishments. Some of the *Jews* will have this to be the terrible Famine spoken of by *Joel* the Prophet; who they fancy lived in these Days. And four Years of it, they say, was caused by noxious Creatures, which eat up all the Fruits of the Earth; and the other three by a Drought, for want of Rain.

Ver. 2. *And the woman arose, and did after the saying of the man of God:]* Who by this Monition hath left us an Example of a grateful Mind, which never thinks it can sufficiently requite Benefits received; and she was abundantly satisfied, that what he predicted would certainly come to pass.

*And she went with her household, and sojourned in the land of the Philistines seven years.]* This Country was so near, that she might easily remove her Family thither, and likewise hear sometimes from her own Country. They were Idolaters indeed, but they suffered those that were not, to live quietly among them, as their Fore-fathers had done; who entertained *Abraham* and *Isaac* with much Friendship, and did not trouble themselves about their Religion; as *Jacob* in like manner sojourned a long Time among Idolaters in *Mesopotamia*. This shews the Severity of God's Anger against *Israel*, that he accounted them worse than the *Philistines*: Who had Plenty among them, when the *Israelites* were almost starved.

Ver. 3. *And it came to pass at the seven years end, that the woman returned out of the land of the Philistines: and she went forth to cry unto the king for her house, and for her land.]* Which some think her Kindred had seized, as if she had been dead. But it is more likely that she carried her Relations along with her into the Land of the *Philistines*: And it was the Custom here, as in other Places, that they who left their Country had their Goods confiscated. See *Grotius*.

Ver. 4. *And the king talked with Gehazi the servant of the man of God, saying, Tell me, I pray thee, all the great things that Elisha hath done.]* Some of the *Jews* think, that the King seeing *Gehazi*, asked him how he came to be leprous; and thereupon he related to him the History of *Naaman* the *Syrian*. Which moved the King, either to satisfy his Curiosity, or pass away the



the Time pleasantly, to desire to hear all the other Miracles *Elisha* had wrought; but he had no Intention to be convinced by them, and turn to God. But then here arises a Question, how *Gebazi* came to be admitted to speak with him; being a Leper, who was not to come into any Company, much less into the King's Presence. This Difficulty, some think, cannot be solved without affirming; that this fell out before *Gebazi* left *Elisha's* Service; such *ὁσερολογία*, as the Greeks call it, being frequent in Scripture; and the Jews, in *Seder Olam Rabba*, place this Famine before the Story of *Naaman*: Which spoils what they say of the Occasion of this Discourse. But there is no need to assert this; for either *Gebazi* upon his Repentance might be restored to Health; or, he might speak with the King at a due Distance, as he walked in the Field for his Recreation; and desired to be entertained with a Relation of *Elisha's* Miracles. Thus *Naaman* conversed with *Elisha's* Family at a Distance; and the Lepers called to our Saviour, as he went along the High-way, St Luke xvii. 12.

Ver. 5. *And it came to pass, as he was telling the king how he restored a dead body to life, that behold, the woman whose son he restored to life, cried to the king for her house, and for her land. And Gebazi said, My lord O king, this is the woman, and this is her son, whom Elisha restored to life.]* By a wonderful Providence she came to present her Petition, and brought her Son with her, in that very Nick of Time when *Gebazi* was telling the Story of his Restauration to Life; that the King might be the more fully satisfied of the Truth of what he related, from her own Mouth.

Ver. 6. *And when the king asked the woman, she told him.]* That is, confirmed what *Gebazi* had said.

*So the king appointed unto her a certain officer,]* In the Margin, *an Eunuch*; that is, one of his Bed-chamber.

*Saying, Restore all that was hers, and all the fruits of the field,]* Not only her House, and Land; but all the Profits that had been made of them, and brought into his Exchequer.

*Since the day that she left the land, even 'till now.]* This was an high Act of Justice, and an Argument of some Goodness left in a bad Man, that he would not gain any thing by her Calamity.

Ver. 7. *And Elisha went to Damascus;]* In the Time of the Famine, I suppose he went thither, as the Woman did to the *Philistines*.

*And Benhadad king of Syria was sick, and it was told him, saying, The man of God is come hither.]* Who having cured *Naaman*, had raised a great Opinion of his Power, with God, in that Country.

Ver. 8. *And the king said unto Hazael,]* Who was the Captain of his Host.

*Take a present in thy hand, and go meet the man of God, and enquire of the LORD by him, saying, Shall I recover of this disease?]* They who consulted Prophets, were wont always to carry a Present with them, in token of the Honour they paid them; as appears by many Instances, particularly of *Jeroboam's* Wife in this Book. It is probable also, he begged his

Prayers for his Recovery; acknowledging him to be a *Man of God*.

Ver. 9. *And Hazael went to meet him,]* As he was coming into *Damascus*.

*And took a present with him, of every good thing of Damascus, forty camels burden, and came and stood before him.]* This was a very noble Present; which whether he accepted or refused, is not mentioned in the Holy Scripture. *Abarbinel* thinks he accepted it, because nothing is said to the contrary, as there is in the Case of *Naaman*, who presented him with Silver, and Gold, and Raiment, and such like things of Value. Whereas this was only a Provision of Food, such as Bread and Wine, and Fruit, and Fowl; which was a fit Present for him to make to the Prophet, who might be presumed to be weary with his Journey, and as fit for him to accept for his Refreshment.

Ver. 10. *And Elisha said unto him, Go, say unto him, thou mayest certainly recover: Howbeit, the LORD hath shewed me that he shall certainly die.]* His Disease was not of such a Nature as would endanger his Life, if he did not lose it by some other Means; as the prophet foresaw he would. For *Josephus* saith, his Disease was only a deep Melancholy, into which he fell upon the shameful Flight of his Army, when no Enemy was near them. This affected his Body, and took away his Appetite; but might have been cured.

Ver. 11. *And he settled his countenance stedfastly 'till he was ashamed: and the man of God wept.]* The most simple Sense is, He looked upon *Hazael* so long, with a settled Countenance, that *Hazael* was ashamed, and he himself fell a weeping. Perhaps he fastned his Eyes upon him as a Man astonished, and that in an Ecstasy saw some dreadful thing represented to him. Others interpret it, he turned away his Face on one Side, 'till he was ashamed, because he wept; which he would not have had *Hazael* seen. Others, he settled his Countenance, not to weep; but he could not refrain from Tears.

Ver. 12. *And Hazael said, Why weepeth my lord? And he answered, Because I know the evil thou wilt do unto the children of Israel: their strong holds wilt thou set on fire, their young men wilt thou slay with the sword, and wilt dash their children, and rip up their women with child.]* This last expresses the highest Degree of barbarous Cruelty; for which there was no Occasion, if he did but kill the Women with Child, for the Child in the Womb would die with them, without ripping them up. Therefore a late learned Man looking on this as a thing unheard-of, will have the Word *Haroth* not to signify Women with Child, but Castles or fortified Places which he should demolish. Though he cannot but acknowledge, that the cutting up Women very naturally follows *slaying their young men, and dashing their children*, which goes just before. And he should have taken Notice, that the very first Evil he mentions that *Hazael* should do to them, is *setting their strong holds on fire*. *Gouffet Comment. Linguae Hebraicae*, p. 216.

Ver. 13. *And Hazael said, But what, is thy servant a dog, that he should do this great thing?]* This is commonly understood, as a disclaiming of such Barbarity, which he abhorred as a beastly thing.



thing. But the Words in the *Hebrew* sound otherways, being a submissive Form of Speech, wherein the Speaker undervalues, and debases himself, as appears from *1 Sam. xxiv. 15. 2 Sam. ix. 8.* and runs thus; *but what is thy Servant? a Dog.* As much as to say, a mean and contemptible Creature, who can never have Power to do such great Things; which none but a Prince can do.

*And Elisha answered, The LORD hath shewed me that thou shalt be king over Syria.]* This was as much as declaring and appointing him King of Syria: Which *Elijah* ordered him to do; and was as much as if he had anointed him. See *1 Kings xix. 15.*

*Ver. 14. So he departed from Elisha, and came to his master, who said to him, What saith Elisha to thee? and he answered, He told me that thou shouldst surely recover.]* He told him only the first Part of his Answer, and that not sincerely, as he intended. For he did not say he *should* surely recover, but that he *might* recover; his Disease being, in it self, not mortal.

*Ver. 15. And it came to pass on the morrow,]* His eager Desire to reign would not suffer him to expect his Master's Death, but he made Haste to dispatch him, the very next Morning after he came from *Elisha*.

*That he took a thick cloth, and dipt it in water,]* The Covering of his Bed, which (as many think) was made of Goats Hair; or, some other thick Cloth, that would suck up a great deal of Water.

*And spread it upon his face, so that he died:]* He being Feverish (as *Josephus* thinks) and complaining of Heat, *Hazael* pretended to cool him by this means; but indeed choaked him; by thrusting the Cloth, perhaps, into his Mouth: So that he could make no Noise, nor did any Sign of Violence remain upon his Body; but the Murder committed so secretly, that it was thought he died a natural Death. But nothing can be concealed from God, who took Care to have the Villany recorded to Posterity, by revealing it to his Prophet.

*And Hazael reigned in his stead.]* Being in great Favour with the People, especially with the Soldiery; and *Ben-hadad*, it is likely, leaving no Son.

*Ver. 16. And in the fifth year of Joram the son of Ahab king of Israel, Jehoshaphat being then king of Judah, Jehoram the son of Jehoshaphat king of Judah began to reign.]* All the seeming Contradictions between this Verse and Chap. i.

*17. and Chap. iii. 1.* are thus briefly reconciled by *Huetius*. *Jehoram* beginning to reign with his Father *Jehoshaphat*, in his seventeenth Year, and *Joram* King of *Israel* in his eighteenth, the first Year of *Joram* King of *Israel* will fall out in the second Year of *Jehoram* King of *Judah*: Whose Father dying in the twenty-second Year of his Reign, *Jehoram* King of *Judah* began to reign alone in the fifth Year of *Joram* King of *Israel*. See *Demonstr. Evang. Propos. 4. pag. 204.*

*Ver. 17. Thirty and two years old was he when he began to reign, and he reigned eight years in Jerusalem.]* Part of which was with his Father, as I now observed, and the rest by himself. Dr *Lightfoot* observing three Dates of the Begin-

ning of his Reign, gives this Account of it. The first was when he was made Viceroy with his Father, at the Time he went out of the Land, for the Recovery of *Ramoth-Gilead*. The second was when his Father went upon his Expedition with *Jehoram* King of *Israel* against *Moab*. (Chap. iii. of this Book) From which Time he thinks the Beginning of his Reign is fixed here, and in *2 Chron. xxi. 20.* For after this Time *Jehoshaphat* was little at *Jerusalem*, but abroad either in his own Land (which he perambulated that he might reduce the People to the true Religion) or in *Moab*, to bring them into Subjection, *2 Chron. xix. 20.* And lastly, at his Father's Death he was compleatly King of *Judah*, *2 Chron. xxi. 1.* See *Harm. of the Evang. Prolegom. Sect. 6.* So that the clearest Solution of the Difficulty mentioned in the foregoing Verse, is this, (as Dr *Alix*, a great Man in this Learning, and all others, hath observed to me) that *Joram* had three Beginnings of his Reign. One in the Seventeenth Year of *Jehoshaphat*, when his Father designed him to be King. The second in the twenty-third Year of his Father, when he was crowned; and the last when his Father (after he had reigned five and twenty Years) died; and he reigned alone a little more than four Years. Thus *Solomon* was made King before his Father died, and again after his Death, as *Abarbinel* observes. See Chap. ii. of the first Book of the *Kings*, ver. 12.

*Ver. 18. And he walked in the way of the kings of Israel, as did the house of Ahab: for the daughter of Ahab was his wife;]* Viz. *Athaliah*, ver. 26.

*And he did evil in the sight of the LORD.]* Being seduced by his Wife, to forsake the Religion of his pious Father and Grandfather. Thus *Ahab* himself was led to the Worship of *Baal* by his Wife *Jezabel*. So dangerous it is to marry with Idolaters: For this Wife of *Jehoram*, in all likelihood, was the Author of that cruel Policy of murdering all his Brethren, for fear they should disturb him in his Kingdom, *2 Chron. xxi. 2, 3, 4.*

*Ver. 19. Yet the LORD would not destroy Judah, for David his servants sake,]* Though he punished them severely (See *2 Chron. xxi. 14, 15, 16, 17, &c.*) yet he would not cut them all off; but had Patience with them a long Time: Upon the Account of that excellent Servant of his, King *David*; unto whom he had made a Promise, as it here follows, and to his Seed after him, of a perpetual Kingdom.

*As he promised him to give him always a light, and to his children.]* A Succession in this Dignity (as I have expounded it before) which was compleated in the MESSIAH, whose Kingdom shall have no End.

*Ver. 20. In his days Edom revolted from under the hand of Judah, and made a king over themselves.]* After they had been subject to *Judah* an hundred and fifty Years; ever since the Time of *David*, who subdued that Country. This was a great Dishonour to him; but by this means the Prophecy of *Isaac* was fulfilled, *Gen. xxvii. 40.*

*Ver. 21. So Joram went over to Zair,]* This Word *Zair* is written differently from *Seir*; and therefore doth not signify any Part of the Country of *Edom*; but some City near to it.

And



*And all the chariots with him,]* With as great a Force as he could raise, to reduce them to Obedience.

*And he rose by night, and smote the Edomites which compassed him about :]* The Edomites were not wanting in their own Defence, but had surrounded him with an Army; through which he broke in the Night, and routed them.

*And the captains of the chariots, and the people fled into their tents.]* To their own Camp; where, it is likely, they were intrenched.

Ver. 22. *Yet Edom revolted from under the hand of Judah]* Notwithstanding this Victory, they could not recover their Dominion over this Country; but Edom continued a Kingdom under its own King.

*Unto this day.]* When this Book was written, which was not long after this Revolt. And they were not brought again under the Power of the Jews 'till after the Captivity of Babylon: When Hyrcanus the Son of Simon conquered them, and they received Circumcision; and came to have a free Commerce with the Jews. Inasmuch that Herod the Son of Antipater, who was an Edomite, obtained the Kingdom of Judea; and endeavoured to pass for a Jew, because they had received Circumcision under Hyrcanus.

*Then Libnah revolted at the same time.]* Which was the Reason, perhaps, why he could not pursue his Victory over the Edomites, and regain their Country; because he had enough to do at Home, there being a Defection of his own Subjects from him. For this was a considerable City in the Tribe of Judah, Josh. xv. 42. and belonged to the Priests, Josh. xxi. 13. Which Example, it is likely, other neighbouring Cities followed. For the Reason why they revolted, was because he attempted to set up his idolatrous Worship among them; contrary to the Law of God, and of the Kingdom. See 2 Chron. xxi. 10, 11.

Ver. 23. *And the rest of the acts of Joram, and all that he did, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah?]* See 1 Kings xi. 41.

Ver. 24. *And Joram slept with his fathers, and was buried with his fathers in the city of David :]* But not in the Sepulchre of the Kings, as we read, 2 Chron. xxi. 20.

*And Abaziah his son reigned in his stead.*

Ver. 25. *In the twelfth year of Joram the son of Abab, did Abaziah son of Jehoram king of Judah begin to reign.]* In the Conclusion of the Eleventh, and Beginning of the Twelfth: As appears from ix. 29.

Ver. 26. *Twenty and two years old was Abaziah when he began to reign, and he reigned one year in Jerusalem ;]* But in 2 Chron. xxii. 2. it is said, he was forty-two Years old when he began to reign: Which seeming Contradiction was anciently solved in this manner (by the Author of Seder Olam Rabba, whom a great many Jewish and Christian Writers follow) that the forty-two Years mentioned in the Book of Chronicles are not to be computed from the Birth of Abaziah, but from the Time of the Decree of cutting off the House of Omri: Which was in the thirty-first Year of Asa, when Omri began to reign, who reigned six Years, and after him Abab twenty and two; and Abaziah

his Son two Years, and Joram twelve: All which put together, make forty-two Years. This Dr Lightfoot hath expressed more plainly thus; "The forty-two Years have not Relation to the Age of Abaziah; but to the Kingdom of the House of Omri. And therefore the Words of the Original are not to be translated, *Abaziah was forty-two Years old*; but *Abaziah was the Son of forty-two Years*, as Seder Olam translates it. And the Reason why his Reign is thus differently set down from all other Kings of Judah is, because he was a Branch of the House of Omri by his Mother's Side, ver. 18. and therefore was fit to be reckoned not by the Line of the Kings of Judah, but by the House of Omri and Abab." But there is an easier and more likely Reconciliation of these two Places, by Kimchi, Abarbinel, and others, which is, that Joram being invaded by the Arabians, and also diseased, made his Son Abaziah King, together with himself, when he was forty-two Years old. In this Condition things remained twenty Years, and then his Father dying, they made him King alone, when he was forty-two Years old. Thus a great Number of Christian Interpreters also understand it. But then they suppose that Jehoram being thirty-two Years old when he began to reign, reigned eight Years (as it is said ver. 17.) after his Father's Death, that is, happily and prosperously; but after that, falling into the Hands of the Arabians, and growing sickly, he reigned ingloriously twenty Years, 'till he was sixty Years old, his Son administering Affairs all this Time for him: But since the LXX in the Book of Chronicles read not *forty-two*, but *twenty*, many learned and good Men think, the ancient Hebrew Copies agreed thereunto; but by the Carelessness of Transcribers, *forty* came in instead of *twenty*. Which it is better they think to acknowledge plainly, than to use forced and constrained Interpretations, as the preceding seem to them to be. Perizonius hath lately censured them all, in these Words, *Si quid ego video aut intelligo, multo rectius divinitati & auctoritati Scripturæ S. consulant, qui vitium istius librariorum in re per se levi agnoscunt, quam qui difficultatem volunt tollere, contortis, violentis & absconis Interpretationibus: quæ ab ipsa Scripturæ locutione, & clarissima Syntaxi longissime recedunt, &c.* And then instances in this very Place, and the foregoing Expressions of it. *Præfat. in Ælian. Var. Histor. \*\*\*\* 2.*

*And his mothers name was Athaliah, the daughter of Omri, king of Israel.]* So she is called also in 2 Chron. xxii. 2. that is, Omri's Grand daughter; who are often called Daughters, as I have before observed. For it is certain Athaliah was the Daughter of Abab; but perhaps educated by Omri his Father, and upon that Account may be called his Daughter. He was the youngest Son of Jehoram, all whose other Children and his Wives were carried away by the Philistines and Arabians, when they made an Inroad upon Judah, 2 Chron. xxi. 16, 17. where he is called Jehoahaz.

Ver. 27. *And he walked in the way of the house of Abab, and did evil in the sight of the L O R D, as did the house of Abab ;]* Not only worshipped the Calves, but also Baal.



*For he was the son in law of the house of Abab.]* And so corrupted in his Religion, by the Affinity he made with that wicked Family. Into which *Jehoshaphat* married his Son, hoping, perhaps, to unite thereby the two Kingdoms again: But it proved the Ruin of his Family; as appears by the Book of *Chronicles*.

Ver. 28. *And he went with Joram the son of Abab, to the war against Hazael king of Syria in Ramoth-Gilead,]* Just as *Jehoshaphat* went with *Abab* to the same Place: Which *Joram* it seems endeavoured to recover to *Israel*, as his Father had done.

*And the Syrians wounded Joram.]* Not mortally, as they did *Abab*: But so, that he was fain to leave the Field, to be cured of his Wounds in *Jezreel*.

Ver. 29. *And king Joram went back to be healed in Jezreel, of the wounds the Syrians had given him in Ramah, when he fought against Hazael king of Syria:]* Leaving his Army at *Ramoth-Gilead*.

*And Abaziah the son of Jehoram king of Judah, went down to see Joram the son of Abab in Jezreel, because he was sick.]* By this means the secret Providence of God so ordered it, that they were both killed by *Jehu*, as a Punishment of their Idolatry.

## CHAP. IX.

Verse 1. **A**ND *Elisha the prophet called one of the sons of the prophets,]* The Prophet *Elijah* was commanded to do this which *Elisha* was now about to do; but *Abab's* Humiliation had moved God to defer the Judgment pronounced upon him and his Family; and so the Execution of it was left to *Elisha*, who did not go himself, because he was better known, and his Business required Secrecy; or, being old, he was unfit for such a Journey: For the last time we read of him, he was at *Damascus*. This young Man, who was now attending him, the *Jews* in *Seder Olam Rabba* say, was *Jonah* the Son of *Amittai*: Which is the Opinion also of *Abarbinel*, and other *Hebrew* Doctors.

*And said, Gird up thy loins,]* Which implies he was to make Expedition, and dispatch his Business before it could be discovered.

*And take this box of oil in thine hand, and go to Ramoth-Gilead.]* Where *Joram* had left his Army; and, as some think, they had now possessed themselves of it.

Ver. 2. *And when thou comest thither, look out there Jehu the son of Jehoshaphat, the son of Nimsi,]* Who some think was left Commander in Chief of the King's Army.

*And make him rise up from among his brethren,]* From the other Officers of the Army, ver. 5.

*And carry him to an inner chamber.]* Left the rest of the Captains should make any Opposition, and apprehend him.

Ver. 3. *Then take the box of oil, and pour it on his head, and say, Thus saith the LORD, I have anointed thee king over Israel:]* The *Jews* think none of the Kings of *Israel* were anointed, but only those of the House of *David*: Nor all they neither, but only when there was a Question about the Succession. For had it not

been for the Faction of *Adonijah*, there had been no need of *Solomon's* Unction. For which reason *Jehu* was anointed, because the Succession to the Kingdom of *Israel* was to be translated out of the right Line of the Family of *Abab*, unto another Family, which had no Right to the Kingdom, but meerly by this Appointment of God: Who not only by his Word, but by this solemn Rite, constituted him King of *Israel*.

*Then open the door, and flee, and tarry not.]* Left by any means what he had done should be discovered, and they might lay hold on him, as a Traitor.

Ver. 4. *So the young man, even the young man the prophet, went to Ramoth-Gilead.]* This argued a great Faith in this young Prophet, that he undertook so readily the Execution of this Command. For there was no small Danger to anoint a new King; as *Elisha* himself plainly suggests; when he bad him flee away, as fast as he could, as soon as he had done.

Ver. 5. *And when he came, the captains of the host were sitting;]* In Council, I suppose, how to carry on the War, or about some other Business. Though some fancy they were at Dinner.

*And he said, I have an errand to thee, O captain.]* Looking upon *Jehu*.

*And Jehu said, Unto which of all us? and he said, Unto thee, O captain.]* This shews that *Jehu* was the Head of them, who asked the Question in the Name of the rest.

Ver. 6. *And he arose, and went into the house,]* Into a private Room, ver. 2.

*And he poured the oil on his head, and said unto him,]* The Oil being poured on his Head, the *Jews* say he anointed him with it (as the manner was) in the form of a Crown: In token that he was the Head of the People, and had the supreme Power over them committed to him.

*Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, I have anointed thee king over the people of the LORD, even over Israel.]* They were still the People of the *LORD* by Right and by Profession, though they worshipped other Gods with him. And it belonged to him to appoint what Ruler he pleased over them; which he did by his Prophet. Without which Authority if *Jehu* had taken the Government upon him, he had been an Usurper.

Ver. 7. *And thou shalt smite the house of Abab thy master,]* Now he acquaints him what God required of him, upon this Promotion.

*That I may avenge the blood of my servants the prophets, and the blood of all the servants of the LORD, at the hand of Jezebel.]* To execute God's Judgment on the House of *Abab*, which he pronounced long ago, for their cruel Murders of his Prophets, and other good Men in *Israel*; particularly *Naboth*. In this *Jehu* acted not out of a Spirit of private Revenge, for he had no Quarrel with the House of *Abab*; but as God's Minister, who by his Prophet authorized him to do what follows.

Ver. 8. *For the whole house of Abab shall perish; and I will cut off from Abab him that pisseth against the wall, and him that is shut up and left in Israel.]* See upon 1 Kings xxi. 21.



Ver. 9. *And I will make the house of Abab like the house of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, and like the house of Baasha the son of Abijah.]* See 1 Kings xiv. 10. xvi. 3.

Ver. 10. *And the dogs shall eat Jezabel in the portion of Jezreel, and there shall be none to bury her.]* See 1 Kings xxi 23.

*And he opened the door, and fled.]* See ver. 3.

Ver. 11. *Then Jehu came forth to the servants of his lord,]* Returned to the Council-Chamber, where they continued sitting, ver. 5.

*And one said unto him, Is all well?]* They seeing the Prophet look like a Man in a Fright, thought he brought some bad News.

*Wherefore came this mad fellow unto thee?]* So they call him, because he came in so abruptly upon them, when they were sitting in Council; and because he fled away so hastily; and because they observed some Motions in him which argued great Disturbance. Though some think, they being profane Idolaters, spake these Words in Scorn and Contempt.

*And he said unto them, Ye know the man, and his communication.]* They might know him to be a Prophet by his Habit, and by his way of speaking, as one that had Authority. And Prophets they knew commonly came to speak something concerning Religion. By which general Answer he thought to have satisfied them, and put by their further Enquiry; that he might take Time to deliberate of the most opportune Season to declare this Message of God to him.

Ver. 12. *And they said, It is false, tell us now.]* They were confident he came about some Matter of great Importance, which he seeming unwilling to discover, they pressed him the harder to tell Truth.

*And he said, Thus and thus spake he unto me, saying, Thus saith the LORD, I have anointed thee king over Israel.]* It is likely the Spirit of Courage, as well as of Prudence, entred into Jehu, when he was anointed, so that he took Heart to tell them boldly what the Prophet had said. And the Oil perhaps was still fresh upon his Head, wherewith he anointed him, which he shewed to them.

Ver. 13. *And they hasted,]* God also moved the Hearts of all the Captains, immediately, without any Consultation, to acknowledge him for their King.

*And took every man his garment, and put it under him]* They made a kind of Throne of their very Garments, and raised him up above the rest of the Company.

*Upon the top of the stairs,]* They did not stay till they came down into the Street, but forthwith, upon the very top of the Stairs of the Place where they were sitting, acknowledged him for their Sovereign; by spreading their Garments under his Feet, to tread upon. So *de Dieu* understands the Words. There is a late Author who guesses these were winding Stairs in a Turret, on the top of which Tower they placed Jehu, that all the People might see him, and hear him proclaimed their King. *Gousset* in his *Comment. Linguae Hebraicae*, p. 173.

*And blew with the trumpet, saying, Jehu is king.]* They proclaimed him to be appointed by God to be King of Israel: Which used

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to be done with the Sound of the Trumpet, 1 Kings i. 32.

Ver. 14. *So Jehu the son of Jehoshaphat, the son of Nimshi, conspired against Joram:]* Contrived, with the rest of the Captains that commanded the Army, how to destroy Joram. For which they had the fairer Opportunity, because he was gone from the Army to Jezreel, as it here follows.

(Now Joram had kept Ramoth-Gilead, he and all Israel, because of Hazael king of Syria:] That is, kept a strong Garrison there, upon the Frontiers of his Kingdom; and left his Army also thereabout (for they are meant by all Israel) for fear Hazael should make any new Attempt to recover it.

Ver. 15. *But king Joram was returned to be healed in Jezreel of the wounds which the Syrians had given him, when he fought with Hazael king of Syria.)]* This was said before, but here repeated, to shew how Jehu came to effect his Design so easily. Which was because Joram was absent from his Army: Among whom if he had continued, it is likely some of them, if not all, would have adhered to him, and fought for him.

*And Jehu said, If it be your minds,]* If they were all agreed, that he should be their King.

*Then let none go forth, nor escape out of the city,]* This shews that Ramoth-Gilead was in the Possession of the Israelites. From whence he would have none to be sent, nor suffered to go forth, but the Gates be narrowly watched.

*To go to tell it in Jezreel.]* For he knew that Secrecy and Speed were necessary to the Execution of such great Designs as he had in Hand.

Ver. 16. *And Jehu rode in a chariot, and went to Jezreel (for Joram lay there) and Abaziah king of Judah was come down to see Joram.]* This is repeated, to shew that Joram continued at Jezreel, whither he went from Ramoth: And that Abaziah, who came to visit him, continued also with him.

Ver. 17. *And there stood a watchman on the tower of Jezreel,]* These Watchmen seem to have been set on high Places, in Time of Peace, as well as War, wheresoever the King was, that he might not be surprized. For David at Jerusalem was admonished by the Watchman that his Sons were safe, when he feared they had been lost, 2 Sam. xiii. 34. as afterward, that News was coming from the Army that fought against Absalom, xviii. 24, 25.

*And he spied the company of Jehu as they came, and said, I see a company.]* A Troop, or Squadron of Horse, as we now speak.

*And Joram said, Take an horseman, and send to meet them, and say, Is it peace?]* He was afraid the Syrians had got the better of his Army; or some more of his Subjects had revolted, as Libnah had done.

Ver. 18. *So there went one on horseback to meet him, and said, Thus saith the king, Is it peace? and Jehu said, What hast thou to do with peace? turn thee behind me.]* The Messenger spake in the King's Name; but he spake to a greater King, who bad him not to trouble himself about Peace, or War, but follow him. Which he durst not refuse, seeing such a Company of Soldiers with Jehu.

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And



*And the watchman said, The messenger came to them, but he cometh not again.]* Which put them in doubt what to think.

Ver. 19. *And he sent out a second on horseback, which came unto them, and said, Thus saith the king, is it peace? And Jebu said, What hast thou to do with peace? turn thee behind me.]* To the same Question the same Answer was returned; that it did not concern him, whether they were Friends or Enemies; but his safest Way was to follow Jebu.

Ver. 20. *And the watchman told, saying, He came even unto them, and cometh not again: and the driving is like the driving of Jebu the son of Nimshi;]* Who was his Grandfather, but a more eminent Person, it is likely, than Jechoshaphat his Father; and so he was commonly called his Son.

*For he driveth furiously.]* He was noted, it seems, for Fierceness, and Eagerness in pursuing his Designs. But the *Chaldee Paraphrast* takes it quite otherwise, that *he drove slowly*; as if he would intice *Foram* to come out of the City, and meet him; having no mind to engage in an Assault, or Siege of *Jezreel*.

Ver. 21. *And Foram said, Make ready. And his chariot was made ready. And Foram king of Israel, and Abaziah king of Judah went out each in his chariot, and they went out against Jebu,]* Not to fight him, but to meet him before he came to the City, that if there was any Sedition he might compose it by his Authority; or, perhaps, in Honour of Jebu; who he saw would deliver his News himself, and not intrust a Messenger with it.

*And met him in the portion of Naboth the Jezreelite.]* By a special Providence of God, which brought them together in that Place.

Ver. 22. *And it came to pass when Foram saw Jebu, that he said, Is it peace, Jebu?]* Seeing him look sternly, I suppose, he began to suspect some Danger.

*And he answered, What peace, so long as the whoredoms of thy mother Jezabel, and her witchcrafts are so many?]* He means her Idolatries, wherewith she bewitched the People, still continued, and were multiplied. Some think indeed that she added Corporal Fornication to her Spiritual, and used evil Arts to provoke Men to filthy Lusts. And indeed all manner of Lewdness was wont to accompany Idolatry; and in *Revel. ii. 20.* they who are compared to *Jezabel*, are said to intice Christians to Fornication, and to eat things sacrificed to Idols; unless by Fornication we there understand Idolatry, and by eating things sacrificed to idols, having Communion with Idolaters.

Ver. 23. *Foram turned his hands,]* The Hand of him that drove the Chariot.

*And fled,]* Towards *Jezreel*; where if he had kept, and enquired what Jebu came for, he might have defended himself for some Time against him.

*And said to Abaziah, There is treachery, O Abaziah.]* Which he discovered too late, having no Forces to resist those of Jebu.

Ver. 24. *And Jebu drew a bow with his full strength, and smote Jehoram between his arms,]* Or, Shoulders; it being, I suppose, a Chariot open behind.

*And the arrow went out at his heart, and he sunk down in his chariot.]* God so ordered it, that he shot him quite through the Heart; so that he died immediately.

Ver. 25. *Then said Jebu to Bidkar his captain, Take him, and cast him in the portion of the field of Naboth the Jezreelite:]* Part of which Abab had made a Garden; but the rest remained a Field.

*For remember, how that when I and thou rode together after Abab his father,]* With the rest of his Guard, when he went to take Possession of Naboth's Vineyard. In the Hebrew the Words are exactly thus, *Remember, thou and I were among those who rode two and two together after Abab, &c.* That is, he was attended by his Guard, who were wont to ride in Pairs, two and two, and Jebu and Bidkar rode at that Time together, and heard *Elijah's* Words.

*The L O R D laid this burden upon him.]* This Punishment, which is frequently by the Prophets called a Burden (*Isaiah xiii. 1, &c.*) was denounced against Abab, and extended to his Son, *1 Kings xxi. 19.* Where these very Words are not recorded; but *Elijah* said more than is there set down, which Jebu well remembered.

Ver. 26. *Surely, I have seen yesterday the blood of Naboth, and the blood of his sons, said the L O R D,]* Some think that *Jezabel* contrived the Death of Naboth's Sons, together with their Father; that they might lay no Claim to the Possession of their Father. But these Words may signify no more (as *Grotius* and others have observed) than the Poverty to which they were reduced. For all Punishments and Miseries are called *Blood* among the Hebrews (*Levit. xvii. 4.*) and to take away their Estate, upon which they should have lived, was in Effect to take away their Blood, in which is the Life of every Creature; as we say now of grievous Oppressors, that they suck the Blood of others; and commonly call them *Blood-suckers*.

*And I will requite it in this place, saith the L O R D. Now therefore take and cast him into the plat of ground, according to the word of the L O R D.]* Without any Burial; that, according to the Prophecy, he might be eaten by the Fowls of the Air, *1 Kings xxi. 24.*

Ver. 27. *But when Abaziah king of Judah saw this, he fled by the way of the garden-house:]* Which was built upon Part of Naboth's Vineyard.

*And Jebu followed after him, and said, Smite him also in the chariot: and they did so, at the going up to Gur, which is by Ibleam: and he fled to Megiddo,]* He could not get to his own Country, and so sheltered himself at *Megiddo*; which was not far from *Samaria*, whither his Servants carried him, as a safer Place (for he was not mortally wounded) and there he hid himself for fear of Jebu, as we read *2 Chron. xxii. 9.*

*And he died there.]* Not at *Megiddo*; but being searched for and taken in *Samaria*, he was brought to Jebu at *Jezreel*, where he commanded him to be slain. Which seems to be beyond his Commission: But as he was an Idolater, so he was of the bloody House of Abab by his Mother's Side, who was Abab's Daughter,